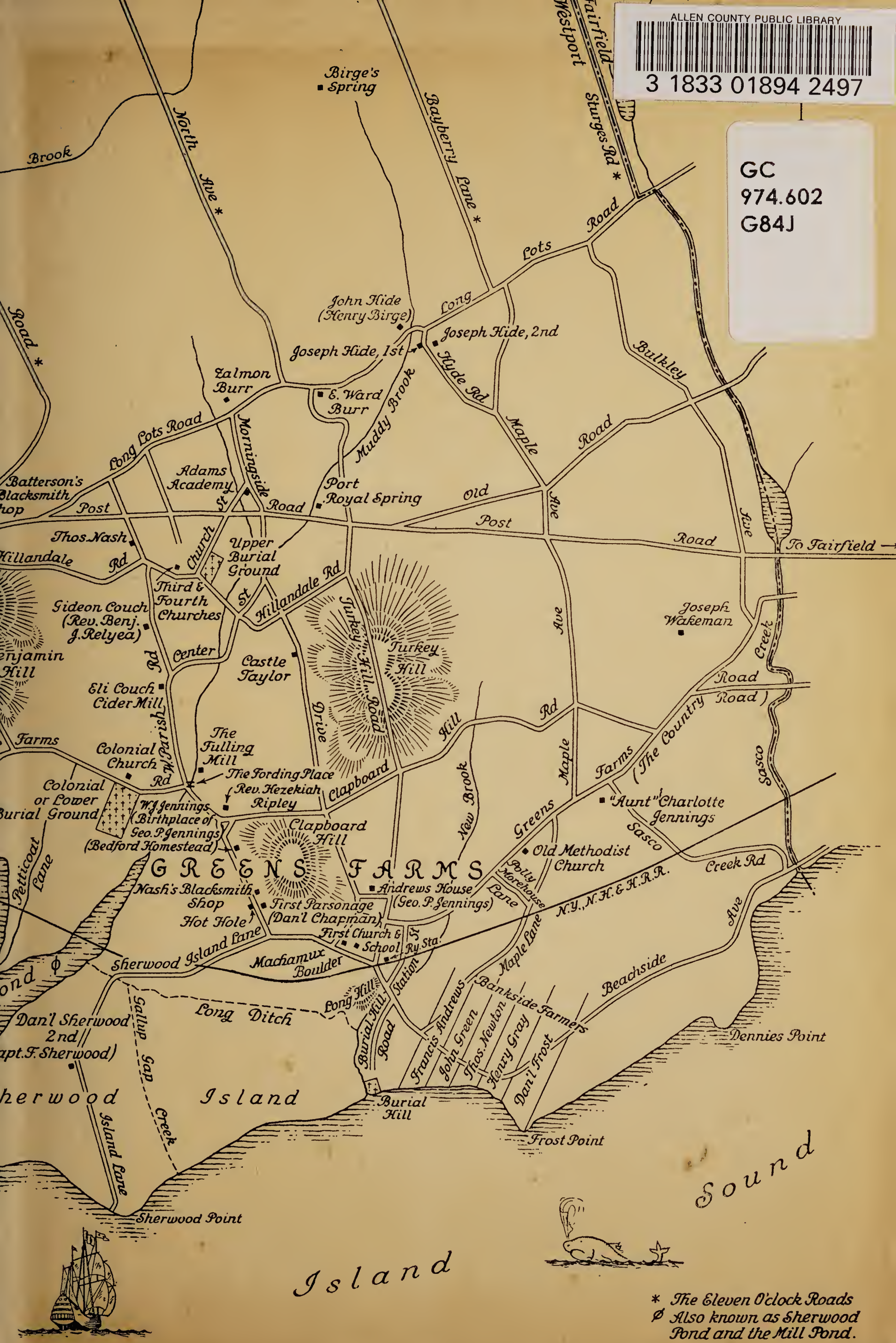


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* The Eleven O'clock Roads
Ø Also known as Sherwood Pond and the Mill Pond.

GREENS FARMS
CONNECTICUT



FROST POINT — 1648

From a painting made especially for this volume by John B. Morris, Jr.

GREENS FARMS

CONNECTICUT

THE OLD WEST PARISH OF FAIRFIELD

..... where the white man following the
cattle trails "sits down and inhabits"

Historical Sketches and Reminiscences by

GEORGE PENFIELD JENNINGS

THE SQUIRE OF ELMSTEAD



"This Court . . . doe find that the first six miles granted to
Fayrefeild hath been measured and is stated to be at a white
oak tree neer Daniel Frost deceased his house, eastward . . ."

May the 12th 1687

THE CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY
OF GREENS FARMS

1933

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OF GREENS FARMS

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To MY FRIEND

FREDERICK T. BEDFORD, ESQ.

WHOSE HOME-LOT OF TEN ACRES LIES OFF THE POINT

AS DID DANIEL FROST'S—

THE BANKSIDE FARMER OF 1648

Foreword

THE AUTHOR of this book was well equipped for the task, for heredity linked him with the early settlers and his experience was saturated with this community life.

Born in Greens Farms, April 11, 1855, he removed as a young boy with his parents to Wisconsin. These impressionable years spent on a large farm in the Middle West brought him back to Greens Farms in his late 'teens with a widened outlook on life.

I feel well qualified to estimate the author because we had been close friends since our school days, when together we went to the Greens Farms Academy under Principal Robert Forsyth and took from him what is now the High School training. From then until his death, which occurred just as this book was going to press, we had been closely linked in church, community, and town affairs.

As a deacon in the church, as an officer of the Greens Farms Farmers' Club, as a town officer, and as a notary public for fifty years, George Penfield Jennings had been in the midst of making the wheels go round, but his life had been broadened by wide travel and shrewd observation.

He brought to this work an insight and affection which few could equal and put down a valuable community record that otherwise would have been lost when his generation is gone.

EDWARD COLEY BIRGE.

GREENS FARMS
CONNECTICUT

The Legend of Machamux

“Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutored mind,
Sees God in storms and hears Him in the wind.”

CHICKENS, a young sachem of the Wallops tribe, and his young squaw, after many moons of wanderings when and where the white man knoweth not, came tracking through the forests and along the ridge of Clapboard Hill. At its crest they halted. It was dark. His squaw cooked the evening meal of game. Then they lay down to sleep under a large oak tree. A hoot owl kept watch during the night.

It was early springtime in his dreams. Chickens saw the promised land before him. He was to shoot forth his arrow, and where it came down and stood upright, there he was to build his wigwam. Oh! that the white man, by play of words, could picture the primitive scene of this red man's promised land. The croaking frogs to Chickens's right down at the hot hole, the lair of skunks and black snakes, early awoke him. He stood up to get a view of his new homeland. In the sky the friendly crows were “caw-cawing” and the eagle was zooming far above while the gray squirrels frisked in the tree tops. To his left, down the hill, was the calamus swamp overgrown with willows, cat-tails, mosses, and alderbushes. He heard the splash

Greens Farms, Connecticut

of the muskrats with their young leaving their winter sod-mounds and eating their full of sweet flag and aqueous plants.

Before him down the hill was an undulating glade fringed about by salt marshes and creeks. He gently shot an arrow, hoping it might alight right in front of him, but it glided and fell far out on the flats of the ebbing tide among the gulls feasting on clams, oysters, and shellfish. He listened and heard the baying of foxes among the forest trees on Fox Island (now for many years named Sherwood Island). He shot his second arrow, hoping the while that it would come down there, but it dropped among the wild duck and geese in the creeks. Away across Compo Pond and on the open hillside of Compo Hill a herd of deer, together with their young, was browsing on the spring herbage and wandering down to the salt-licks. But that was too far to shoot an arrow!

Over across the valley of Muddy Brook there was a pleasing prospect on Benjamin Hill. The woodcocks were whir-rr-rr-ing, the partridges drumming, and in nuptial play a pair of quail were whistling "Too wet—more wet—too wet—more wet." To his left, Chickens saw a flock of wild turkeys circling around, looking for a nesting place on Turkey Hill. He was still in doubt. His last arrow, the ancestral totem of his tribe, prized for its Indian craftsmanship and tipped with a finely wrought flint arrow-point, remained in

The Legend of Machamux

the quiver. He looked again toward the level fields of Frost Point near the great sea. Can he shoot his arrow so far? He is a sachem, a brave. He bends his bow; his totem arrow whirls forth and soars over the space, comes down, and stands up. He sees the fluttering feather tip through the mists of early morning. Chickens* and his squaw followed, and where the arrow stood he built his wigwam. His squaw dug up the soil, and when the buds opened on the hickory tree, showing the papoose paws, the sign for planting corn, there was a young papoose in the wigwam.

The Indian named this new land *Machamux*—"The Beautiful Land." It was his possession by right of discovery and occupation. The white man interprets the meaning of *Machamux* as "The Red Man's Paradise."

* An Indian sachem by the name of Chichens signed the deed in which were reservations and privileges for fish and fowling. The relations between the white men and the Indians seem to have continued friendly. In 1725 a small sachem, variously known as Sam Mohawk, Chickens, Warrups Chichekns, or Chicken Wallups, said to be a Mohawk, sold his remaining land to Samuel Couch for 12 pounds and 6 shillings, and withdrew to the hills of Redding. Here he received the Indian belt which came from Towattowau. In 1749 he retired further to the north. To settle the Indian question once and for all the General Court at Hartford granted the Schaghticoke tribe 200 acres of land in the town of Kent in Litchfield County. Here Chicken Wallups spent his last days. As one rides up along the new state highway through the valley of the Housatonic, a mile before entering Kent, if he looks across the river he will see a few brown, wood houses. This is the reservation and here are said to be still living one or two last members of the Schaghticoke tribe. Here died Chicken Wallups, a descendant of the red man who first greeted the white man on the Indian fields of Greens Farms.

Captain John Gallup. 1637

IN 1637 Captain John Mason, in command of the English colonists' soldiers and friendly Indians, was pursuing to the west the hostile Pequots from their stronghold in and around New London. Contemporary history states that a supporting fleet of vessels was coasting along the Connecticut shore carrying ammunition and supplies for these soldiers, and although no mention is definitely made, no doubt this fleet was commanded by Captain John Gallup. This Captain Gallup was reported to have been a daring vesselman and Indian trader and had already won distinction and prowess as an Indian fighter around Block Island and Narragansett Bay. The fleet hove to in Guilford Harbor and later came to anchor in New Haven Harbor, where the soldiers went ashore, rested, and reconnoitered. The Pequots slipped away to the west and finally made their last stand in Pequot Swamp, Southport. The monument near the Post Road has this inscription:

“The Great Swamp Fight here Ended
The Pequot War. July 13, 1637.”

Meanwhile, Captain John Gallup was coasting along, keeping in touch with but just in advance of

Captain John Gallup. 1637

the land forces, so as to land and help cut off the fleeing Pequots. The tidal inlet, just east of Sherwood Island, which has carried the name of Gallup Gap Creek from the earliest times, is some two miles beyond Pequot Swamp. It appears reasonable therefore that Captain John Gallup sailed his vessels through the Gap and made a landing in the deep creeks alongside the uplands known as the Horse Pasture.

This daring event dates the Greens Farms history from 1637. I have heard elderly people say that the name "Gallup Gap Creek" came from the galloping horses down in the horse pasture. This theory of the name is wrong. Captain John Gallup was known and lived "on east." His name is still perpetuated there by many persons. The word gap means an opening or passageway on land or sea, so that this intrepid navigator is entitled to the honor of naming this inlet "Gallup Gap Creek."

New Plantations

THE subjugation of the powerful tribe of Pequots opened up Tidewater Connecticut from the Housatonic westward for new settlements by the English. Here were giant forests on the hillsides, sweet springs of water and streams, rich soil in the valleys, common lands for pasturage, tidal inlets, creeks, and meadows. Here was an abundance of sea food and game.

In 1639 Roger Ludlow and his associates started a plantation at Unqua, thus founding the colonial town of Fairfield. The cattle of the new settlement were branded and at first were pastured on the "Common," watched by the town's herdsman. Before long, however, led by their instinct to find sweet and nutritious new grass, the cattle browsed farther afield and eventually made their way out through Mill Plain to the ford of Mill River. Slaking their thirst with the pure water, they wandered southward along the eastern slope of Mill Hill. They continued grazing down along the region of Pequot Avenue to the Sasqua Fields, pausing abruptly at the mouth of the Sasqua (Sasco) River. The herdsman, looking beyond to the westward, saw a wide plain of luxuriant pasture land; at

New Plantations

the next low tide he drove the cattle across the river to the Machamux Field. Gradually they spread out, south of Little Creek—a fresh-water slough stretching westward from the Sasco—and on along the winding creeks, covering the site of the present Bedford Gardens, where there was ample pasturage on the grassy bluffs overlooking Long Island Sound.

By sign language the red man welcomed the white man and granted free pasturage for his cattle; by sign language, too, he pointed out his sachemdom, *Machamux*, from the seaway up and over the hills and valleys to the Aspetuck and beyond, and from the River Saugatuck to the Sasqua.

The herdsman saw that it was a goodly land for white settlement. From the crest of Clapboard Hill, the foot of which was skirted by the plateau of the red men's homes, a fair country was spread before him. Below lay a flat terrain soon to be devoted to a "Common" and just beyond the rounded slope of Bridge Hill with its oak tree—one of our first landmarks. To the right was wooded Long Hill, and then the grassy expanse long known as the Horse Pasture; beyond, the salt meadows and Gallup Gap Creek, the beach, and the shining waters of Long Island Sound. Away to the south in a blue haze could be seen the bald headlands of *Sawanhacky*, the Island of Shells, or Long Island. The baying of foxes on the large wooded island of a hundred acres off the shore caused the

Greens Farms, Connecticut

herdsman to call it Fox Island. *Compaug* (Compo) Pond was just beyond, and in full view out in the Sound was Cockenoes Island (its original name). To the north stretched out an intriguing landscape of forests, valleys, and winding streams—Greens Farms in its original sylvan beauty. The herdsman lost no time in telling all about it to the Fairfield colonists.

Three farmers, Thomas Newton, Henry Gray, and John Green, quickly followed the cattle trails, and, guided by the herdsman to the top of Clapboard Hill, viewed the prospect from there. On their own responsibility they decided at once, “with Yankee knack for a good bargain,” to purchase the land from the Indians. This purchase extended over a mile frontage along the Sound, from an oak tree west to and including Fox Island, and northerly to the Aspetuck River. Two other associates chosen by these three men and approved by the town of Fairfield were Daniel Frost and Francis Andrews.

The first document relating to this settlement is one which contains articles of agreement between the town of Fairfield and certain individuals who were allowed to “sit down and inhabit” in this place. It bears the date of 1648. For the preservation of this document we are indebted to that wise provision of the Colonial Government which required that each town should transmit copies of all grants, deeds, and transfers of land to Hartford, to be put on record there.

New Plantations

The frontispiece or preamble is not preserved, but the items of agreement are in the words following:

“Imprimus: It is agreed that Thomas Newton, Henry Gray and John Green shall have liberty to sit down and inhabit at Machamux; and shall have for each of them laid out as in property to themselves and their heirs forever, twenty acres in upland, to be laid out indifferently by the appointment of said town, in a convenient place, where it may not be too obnoxious to the depasturing and feeding of the cattle of said town. And that if they improve the said land, to make a sufficient mound or fence, or mounds and fences, to secure their said town and land from the trespass of the cattle of the inhabitants of said town. And their fence shall be viewed by said town, or their deputies, whether or no, and shall be therein subject to such orders as the town shall make about other farms of the town.

“ITEM: That there shall be sufficient passage and way or ways for the cattle of said Fairfield to pass to the sea-shore; and all the way to feed and depasture to and again in those parts; and that neither the inhabitants of the said town nor their cattle may be prevented that way.

“ITEM: That there may be sufficient quantity of meadow laid out by the inhabitants of said town, or their deputies, to the parties above said, for their

Greens Farms, Connecticut

comfortable subsistence in that place. And that the parties above said shall only keep their own sheep in and upon their said land and commons adjoining, and not take cattle to foragement and depasture in the commons of said town.

“ITEM: That the aforesaid parties and their heirs be subject to all taxes and rates of the said town wherein they have a common benefit together with said town, and are subject to the officers of said town, save only in watching and warding.

“ITEM: That there may be liberty to said parties to take in two more inhabitants by full consent and approbation of the town of Fairfield: and that they be approved as aforesaid, there may be like quantity of upland and meadow set out to them by the town upon the terms aforesaid.

“ITEM: It is agreed that if said town and the parties are not agreed between themselves about the meadows and upland, the court to be the indifferent judges.”

Then, under the guidance and legal sanction of Fairfield, Daniel Frost and Francis Andrews joined the first three settlers, and at the end of 1648 all five men with their families were securely settled on a ten-acre home-lot, each home-lot having twenty acres of pasture land attached to it. The settlement was known as Bankside. Fairfield kept a jealous eye upon

New Plantations

the new development—perhaps with reason. The five farmers of Bankside, quick to perceive the promising merits of their new waterside plantations, were no sooner settled than they bought of the natives more shore frontage to the west, with the northern boundary indefinite. This was Yankee initiative, Yankee independence of action indeed, but of such a large order that it raised the wind in Fairfield. Roger Ludlow and his deputies brought the matter to the attention of the General Court.

Fortunately, just then a boundary dispute with the town of Norwalk influenced Fairfield to agree to the territorial ambitions of Bankside. The dispute was that in its original charter, the colony of Fairfield supposed that its western boundary was the Saugatuck River, but in measuring along the coastline of Long Island Sound from the Pequonnock River it was found that the number of miles in the original grant brought the western boundary in the neighborhood of Burial Hill. The colonial town of Norwalk was set off in 1651 and claimed that its eastern boundary crossed the Saugatuck and ended abruptly at New Creek—the western boundary of Fairfield.

This dispute lasted half a century and it seemed to be a strategic move on the part of Fairfield to encourage the Bankside farmers, since their settlement was a sort of buffer state to hold back the pretensions of Norwalk. She made no objection when the Bank-

Greens Farms, Connecticut

side farmers assumed for themselves the lofty—and unheard of!—title of Proprietors, and administered their land as they saw fit. In 1711 the mother settlement allowed them to organize an independent ecclesiastical society, which, as was the custom in those days, exercised both religious and civil functions. This society has an unbroken history down to the present. Theoretically a subsidiary of Fairfield, it has always been practically independent and was the germ of the present town of Westport.

October 26. Anno Dom. 1715.

A Church of Christ was then gathered and embodied at Fairfield west Parish. And y. Revd Mr Daniel Chapman ordained their Pastor. y. Revd Mr Desmout gave y. Charge, he with y. Revd Mr Webb Mr Howe Mr Cutter and Mr Stanley (imposing hands) y. Revd Mr Cutter gave y. right hands of Fellowship to y. Pastor and Mr Stanley to y. Church.

The original We do in y. Humble sense of our deep unwor-
Covenant think of an Acknowledgment in y. Covenant
of Divine Grace and also of our inability unto the
Performance of y. Duties of y. holy Covenant thro
y. Strength and Grace of Christ alone heartily and
sincerely engage and promise in y. Presence of God
And his People Denying all ungodliness and worldly
Lusts to live soberly righteously and Godly in this
present World solemnly swearing our selves and
our soulds unto y. Lord to be his People Avouching
Almighty God for our God and Portion Avouching
The Lord Jesus Christ for our only Prophet and Teacher.
And for our only Priest and Propitiation and for our
only King Lord and Lawgiver Avouching y. holy
Ghost for our Sanctifier professing our Subjection
To y. Gospel of Christ and y. we will walk together
In a Consistent attendance upon all y. Ordinances
of y. Gospel and in a Member-like Communion
Helpfulness and Watchfulness according unto Christ.

Daniel Chapman
Joseph Lookwood
Jonathan Squire
Joshua Jennings
Henry Grey
Samuel Couch
John Andrews
Thomas Nash

These found among y. Revd Mr Chapman's
scattered papers after his decease
And now entered upon Record July 5. A. Dom. 1742

Mr Chapman's
Death.

The Revd Mr Chapman departed this life
November 28— Anno Domini 1741.

Mrs Chapman's
Death.

Mrs Christ Chapman y. Relict of y. Revd Mr Daniel
Chapman departed this life June 10. 1744.

THE ORIGINAL COVENANT OF THE CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF GREENS FARMS

From the Church Record Books

The Bankside Farmers

THESE five proprietors seem to have been the only settlers here for nearly twenty years. They were known and spoken of as the "five farmers of Bankside." Daniel Frost's ten-acre home-lot was located on Frost Point, the home-lot of Mr. F. T. Bedford's estate today. Adjoining this on the west was the lot of Henry Gray; the large old elm tree still standing on Beachside Avenue was probably the corner of his home-lot. Next came the land of Thomas Newton; then the home-lot of John Green; the home of the fifth farmer, Francis Andrews, stood near the residence of the late F. H. Bedford. West of the home-lots of these five proprietors, on a nine-acre home-lot, Simon Couch "sat down" at a later date. In 1650 Thomas Newton sold out his right here to Robert Beacham, also spelled "Meacham." It is interesting to note that recently Captain Increase A. Parsell and the author traced the boundary lines of these original home-lots and found that the northerly boundary of these lots is near the southerly boundary of Mr. Parsell's farm.

John Green became one of the largest landholders and in his honor the name of Bankside was changed to Greens Farms in 1732. Previously there had been a movement to adopt the name *Machamux* by the Gen-

Greens Farms, Connecticut

eral Court, but it failed. The following is a copy of the record of the landholdings of Mr. John Green at his death:

“March 26, 1669, Volume A, Page 186 gives to the holdings of John Green as follows: Home-lot 10 acres, bounded East by Robert Beacham; North by the Common; West by land of Simon Couch and John Andrews; South by highway. Also 7 acres of meadow, bounded South by the beach; East by Great Island (Sherwood Island); West by Little Island; North by Robert Beacham. Also 5 acres of meadow at the head of Compo Creek. Also 2 acres of meadow at the head of the old Calves Pasture. Also two parcels of 5 acres each, on the Island. Also $10\frac{3}{4}$ acres in the Horse Pasture. Also (August 4 1683) $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres at the bank side in the Calves Pasture. Also 30 rods near the Roade bridge. Also by grant of Town March 4 1680, one parcel on the west side of Muddy Creek, being his building and pasture lot together, in quantity $27\frac{3}{4}$ acres, 35 rods, bounded: East by the highway: West by John Andrews: North and South by the Common. Also his Long Lot, being in breadth 24 rods, running from the half-mile Common northward to the end of the Town bounds. All the above pieces are described as to boundaries on the records.”

Francis Andrews in his will of June 6, 1662, among his bequests mentions three acres of meadow called the “heather bite.” Milton S. Lacey, Esq., Title

The Bankside Farmers

Officer of the Bridgeport Land and Title Company, gives the following explanation:

“As to the term ‘Heather Bite,’ I am inclined to believe that the word ‘heather’ is a corruption of the word ‘hither,’ meaning nearer. In this connection please note that the earliest record of the holdings of Francis Andrews, June 25, 1669, contains: ‘Also one parcel of meadow lying in the hither bite, in quantity 3 acres, more or less, bounded: West with Stony Hill: North with a highway: South with the Creeks and the Common Meadow: East with a highway.’ (Vol. A. Page 200.)”

Stony Hill is the same as Long Hill, which extended from the Old Common to the meadows at New Creek, now the property of the Jennings brothers. The word “meadow” in the earliest records refers to what we term today as salt meadows.

Home-Lots and Pasture Lands

WHEN, in 1648, the colonial town of Fairfield set off home-lots and pasture lands to the five farmers of Bankside, it was trespassing upon the sachemdom of Machamux, and it was not until 1660 that the town, by purchase of this land from its original owners, the red men, could give good and valid deeds to the land.

It was Fairfield's policy to divide its common lands among its freeholders according to rates, values of freeholds, wife, children, etc. Hence the biggest proprietors gained new acreage in every distribution and some, by purchase or trading, became extensive landholders. Many of these early family possessions have come down through the centuries to the present day. However, this plan worked against later settlers, especially the poorer ones, who often could not buy a home site but received permission to build a house by the roadside. I have known half a dozen such in this parish. "Squatters," they were dubbed.

A good illustration of the above-mentioned method of division is the division in 1682 of the Indian Field lands of some 80 acres from Frost Point easterly along the Sound to Southport Harbor. There were 94 divisions of which Daniel Frost drew number one: 1

Home-Lots and Pasture Lands

acre, 29 rods, 6 feet. The smallest division, 29 rods, went to George Squires.

There appear to have been two divisions of Compo Neck in 1682. The first was three rods per pound, the second was five rods per pound, in all 102 divisions.

On January 30, 1671, the half-mile common was laid out from Stratford west boundary to the Saugatuck River. The Greens Farms Long Lots Road is the northern boundary of this half-mile common. North of this common the town of Fairfield in 1670 laid out 71 long lots, so-called, some 100 proprietors participating. The breadth in rods ranged from 70 rods to 4 rods. In addition these proprietors were granted building lots and pasture lands.

In this layout of long lots, Simon Couch owned the last one next to the Norwalk boundary line. These long lots extended some miles up country and were laid out as paralleling Stratford's west boundary which was about 22 degrees west of north from the present site of Seaside Park following the present Park Avenue in Bridgeport. Later highways were laid out between these long lots. Following the general direction these highways were likewise some 22 degrees west of north and they have been called the "eleven o'clock lines" highways. These narrow long lots were traded, bought, and sold; thus some proprietors increased their landholdings.

Greens Farms, Connecticut

I can remember when various members of the Jennings family owned all of the Indian Fields land. There was only a barn on this land, no house, no trees, and the whole acreage was cultivated in onions, with carrots between the onion rows as a second crop. Occasionally hay or grain was grown for rotation. In 1874 Andrew W. Jennings built the first house on the above land for his son, Wilbur. This homestead was later purchased by Mr. John H. Cole, remodelled and relocated so as to face the water. Eugene G. Henckle is now the owner of this property.

In his earlier life, my father was called upon to appraise this land for the settlement of estates. The average price was \$75 to \$150 per acre, and the heirs would say "Do not give us this Field land, but land to the north among the hills." Today this same land of 80 acres is the site of ten mansions, set among sweeping lawns and fair gardens, and the assessed value for taxation runs up into the thousands per acre.

Here is an interesting bit of history about a certain eight-acre tract of ground on the eastern slope of Clapboard Hill, now part of the estate of D. Swing Starring. This eight-acre tract of land was laid out by the proprietors of the Common Land for Gideon Hurlbert in 1750, described as "a piece of land in the Parrish of Greens Farms on Clapboard Hill, in quantity 8 acres and 20 rods" and bounded:

"Northwesterly and Northeasterly on the highways;

Know all men by these presents that I John Hyde of Fairfield of the Colony of Connecticut for and in consideration of a certain parcel of land exchanged made over and confirmed to me by Nathan Adams junr of S Fairfield in an instrument bearing equal & even date with these presents, have & by these presents do grant sell make over & confirm unto the S Nathan Adams junr and to his heirs & assigns for ever a certain parcel of land lying in S Fairfield being part of the long lot that was John Thompson's & part of the long lot that was my honoured father John Hyde's deceased, and it is eight rods in breadth next adjoining to S Nathan's land, & it is bounded Southwesterly by the Common, North Easterly by my own land Northwesterly by land I sold to Benjamin Rumsey described in a deed I made to S Rumsey of the same date with these presents, Southwesterly by S Adams' land, Cont Quantity more or less, with all the privileges & appurtenances thereto belonging or thereunto by any manner of way or means belonging except the Cop now on the S land, To have and to hold unto the S Nathan Adams junr & to his heirs & assigns the S granted parcel of land & bargain premises except before accepted for his & heirs only use & behoof for ever more except before accepted, affirming my self to be the true proprietor and to have good right full power and lawfull authority to sell the premises in manner aforesaid and that the same immediately before the sealing & delivery hereof was free & clear from all former bargain sales mortgages or incumbrances whatsoever. in Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand & seal this eight day of June anno Domini 1717.

Signed sealed & delivered
in presence of
Peter Burr
Sam^l Gregory

John Hyde
These words [and after] before
me & to be used intended before sealing
John Hyde delivered to the
instrument acknowledged the same
to be his free act & deed before me
Peter Burr Affiant

DEED TO PROPERTY ON LONG LOTS ROAD, 1717

From the original in the possession of Judge Joseph Adams

Home-Lots and Pasture Lands

“Southeasterly on land laid out to the heirs of Samuel Buckingham; and

“Southwesterly on land that belonged to the Rev. Mr. Chapman, deceased.”

This land was conveyed by the Hurlberts to the Andrews, and conveyed by John Andrews to John Hyde in 1787. It was left by John Hyde to the Presbyterian Society of Greens Farms (now The Congregational Society) for parsonage purposes and was leased to Reverend Hezekiah Ripley for pasturage.

In 1807 the society leased this land to Hezekiah Phillips and Jesse Jennings for a term of five thousand years. The leasehold of this land seems to have figured about \$65 an acre and the total amount was merged in the permanent funds of the society, which are still intact. This procedure seems to have been the only way of disposing of entailed property in the early days. The courts in later years clear such titles by statute law. Today this land is assessed for over \$1000 per acre. Lands with a good outlook, even in the woods or on woody hillsides, command large prices for residential purposes far above their agricultural value. And only yesterday we were an agricultural people.

South of the half-mile of common the town of Fairfield set apart 10-acre home plots and 20-acre pasture lands to the early inhabitants. This land distributed by Fairfield helped to make small communities, for

Greens Farms, Connecticut

two or more farmers built their homesteads near each other or at the corners of cross roads. This plan made neighbors close together for protection and for mutual assistance in farm work.

Often a common or green was left out from the farm lands adjacent. Such was the plan at Greens Farms when the second generation moved across the creek and settled on the southern and eastern slope of Clapboard Hill. On this common was built the first school-house in 1703, and the first meeting-house in 1711.

The early proprietors bought and owned Sherwood Island in common. Then a strip of upland from the common on the southerly side of the land leading to the island was set apart and known until this day as the Horse Pasture.

On the westerly slope of Clapboard Hill Fairfield granted six acres for a parsonage to the first minister, and the West Parish of Fairfield—the ecclesiastical term for Bankside settlers—voted to build a house for their minister. It was a building some 40 feet long, 20 feet wide, with a “chimbly” and 2 chambers, and “cifered” on all sides with shingles (clapboards) 4 feet long. The splitting or riving out of these shingles gave the name to Clapboard Hill. It is a popular fallacy that this name originated from the early custom of clapping boards together to summon the colonists to worship from the hill above the meeting-house. Church records show that a certain yearly sum was

Home-Lots and Pasture Lands

set aside for the beating of the drum for that purpose.

The town also voted two acres to the first blacksmith who would locate here. Thomas Nash accepted the offer. His shop and land were near the Hot Hole between Clapboard Hill and the county road, just west of Reverend Chapman's home. He soon became the most important mechanic in the settlement, as he made nails, hinges, hardware for houses, iron work for ox-yokes, carts, chains, axes, guns, carpenter's tools, augers, and was often a silversmith, too.

The Proprietors Join with Fairfield

THE town of Fairfield in 1665 appointed a committee to meet with the farmers at Bankside, Machamux, to treat with them concerning “what relation they stand in to us and what said committee shall do in the premises if the town will stand to.” The next year another meeting occurred and the following agreement was entered into:

“Articles of agreement between Nathan Gould, John Burke, John Burr, Cor. Hull and William Hill on behalf of the town of Fairfield on the one part and the farmers of Machamux, alias called Bankside, on the other part, witnesseth:

“1. In premisses it is agreed that the above said farmers and the town of Fairfield shall for the future be one township. The above said farmers do adjoin their mile as an addition to the bounds of Fairfield. And said farmers are to be equal in town privileges and charges according to their proprietors, with the rest of the inhabitants of the town of Fairfield. The said farmers are to be subject to town orders about fencing or whatever else shall be ordered as any other inhabitants of the town of Fairfield are.

“2. It is agreed that the farmers shall possess as their proprietary property all such lands and meadows as they have already in fence as is on the east side of

The Proprietors Join with Fairfield

Compo Creek leading up to Muddy River, which they have now in their possession.

“3. That if said farmers desire it, there shall be laid out for each farmer in some convenient place, 15 acres of upland for their own use and property.

“4. It is agreed that John Green shall enjoy freely 5 acres that he possesseth on the west side of Compo Creek to be to him and to his heirs forever if the town sees good to grant it.”

(Note: It appears to the author that this five acres may be the same as the land within the Colonial Burying Ground. From some searches I can find no record of transfer of lands for this cemetery.)

5. Refers to sufficient foot bridges across Sasco and Mill Rivers.

6. Refers to notices of town meetings.

“7. It is agreed that such agreement as said farmers have already entered into about a bridge over Gallup Gap going to their lands shall be abiding as formerly each with the other.”

Notwithstanding the above agreements of the farmers with the town, Fairfield “springs” this:

“8. It is agreed that such Indian deeds whether by gift or purchase shall be surrendered up to the town upon consideration of the premises by the farmers.”

(Probably as a conciliatory gesture to disarm the antagonism which “8” was bound to arouse, the mother town generously added:)

Greens Farms, Connecticut

“9. It is agreed that the farmers’ west bridge near their houses, which now lieth over the creek,* shall for the future be maintained out of the town treasury. The farmers with cows are not to pay to the town herd.

“10. It is agreed that of the above third article covering the grant of more land doth only respect the five first farmers that settled here, viz: Thomas Newton, Daniel Frost, Henry Gray, John Green and Francis Andrews.”

11. Refers to two acres. Robert Beacham. “All the above said parties have hereunto set their hands this 20th day of Jan. 1666.”

The General Court acquiesced to this document of agreements and ordered the added mile to be laid out to Fairfield. However, the proprietors at Bankside continued to own and administer Fox or Farmers’, now Sherwood, Island in common, and more or less ignored Fairfield’s interference. Adjoining this land by a stretch of beach and salt meadow was Little Island of some ten acres. John Green at one time owned some

* The above refers to the creek to the west of the Bankside farms and is first mentioned here: strange indeed that no early deed hinted at its existence; strange, too, that it was not used as a boundary for which purpose it was naturally adapted. It was never given a definite name, being generally known as the Farms Creek, Green Farms Creek, and more popularly New Creek. To my mind a most appropriate name would be “New Gallup Gap”—that would perpetuate a historic name in our annals. This creek was an important harbor for small coasting vessels in the early times, having a wide channel up through the salt meadows above the bridge. I have been informed that in early times there was a dock and warehouse and shipping port along the coast at the foot of Bridge Hill, now the property of the Jennings brothers. This creek has its outlet into Long Island Sound at Burial Hill.

The Proprietors Join with Fairfield

acreage of it. The title was in the Andrews family from that day until a few years ago when the Honorable John H. Perry sold it for the heirs of that family. Today it is a part of Sherwood's Island State Park. It is wooded over its entire surface.

The settlement of the mile frontage of the proprietors and the town of Fairfield as above stated, started the younger generation to migrate over the creek and take up lands on and around Clapboard Hill.

The Second Generation

THE Andrews family settled on the slope of Clapboard Hill, and "Elmstead," the home of the author and the six-acre home-lot, was in that family until 1816 when my grandfather, John B. Jennings, bought the farm.

The Couch family secured the land to the east of the common reaching to the salt-water creek and the Bridge Hill lot now owned by the Jennings brothers.

Christopher Sturges had a small home-lot on the easterly end of the present S. Morgan Barber property, and he was granted a site for ten vats, but the exact location of this colonial industrial plant I cannot ascertain.

Edward Jesup, the founder of the honorable Jesup family in Greens Farms and later in Westport, was born in 1663 in either Newtown or West Farms in New York State, and when three years old was brought to Connecticut. In due time he became a freeman of the town of Fairfield. He married Elizabeth Hyde in 1692. He was a cultivator of the soil, and also gathered from the abundance of the sea which was at his very door. He, like the others, lived plainly but had a liberal supply of needful things. In 1721 he deeded by will to his son Edward as follows, in part:

"My homestead at Maximus or the West Parish in

The Second Generation

said Fairfield containing all my lands adjoining together where my new dwelling house standeth be it in quantity more or less. And is bounded easterly by lands of Thomas Couch; south by John Andrews meadows or a highway in part and partly by land of John Lockwood; west in part by a highway and in part by land of John Lockwood; north by the Common, together with all the buildings, fruit trees, garden, yard and fences.”

This property is later described as being where the homestead of the late Austin Jennings was located. Long Hill, a wooded ridge leading from the old common to the salt meadows, is mentioned. The building of the railway in 1848 bisected this homestead and the Old Green or Common. The mention of Long Hill establishes the location beyond a doubt. This Jesup property also included the homestead of the Morehouses that faced the Green or Common at the intersection of Greens Farms and Beachside Avenue, where now reposes the memorial boulder.

On the crest of Clapboard Hill where the red man first viewed Machamux, “the beautiful country,” stands the residence of William H. Davis, and just south is the homestead of Michael Hawie. This lot was called the Clapboard Hill Lot in a conveyance of 1838. In a very early will there is mention of the “Heather Bite Meadow,” of which I have already spoken. An oak tree is mentioned as the western

Greens Farms, Connecticut

boundary of the original colonial town of Fairfield. There is a large oak tree still standing on the rounding point of upland of the old Bridge Hill lot near the Jennings brothers' estates, and this may be the location of that early oak tree. I do not know. Many other interesting facts and places I cannot locate, as for instance, where Widow Abigail Jennings had her tavern.

The Fairfield West Parish

AFTER the adjustment of the mile frontage between the proprietors at Bankside and the town of Fairfield, in 1666, the country increased in inhabitants, the settlers spreading around Compo Pond to Compo Hill, up the Saugatuck Valley and into the Long Lots region toward the Aspetuck River. These early settlers were of Puritan stock, God-fearing, frugal, hard-working.

Thus, by 1708, having so numerous a settlement, the people of Machamux petitioned the General Court to be set aside as a separate parish. This, Fairfield did not relish and, under her objections, the matter went over until October, 1710, when the petition was renewed, and the General Assembly at its May session in 1711 voted to grant the petition unless Fairfield should show sufficient reason against it.

In the foregoing petition it was shown that from Henry Gray, Jr.'s, place in Compo to Samuel Couch's place the distance was 2 miles. From Couch's place to the schoolhouse in Machamux was $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, lacking 4 rods, and from this schoolhouse to the meeting-house in Fairfield $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles and 70 rods, the whole distance from Compo to Fairfield, 8 miles and 66 rods. The inhabitants numbered west of Sasco River to Machamux, 182, and in the Compo section, 88—a total of 270 persons.

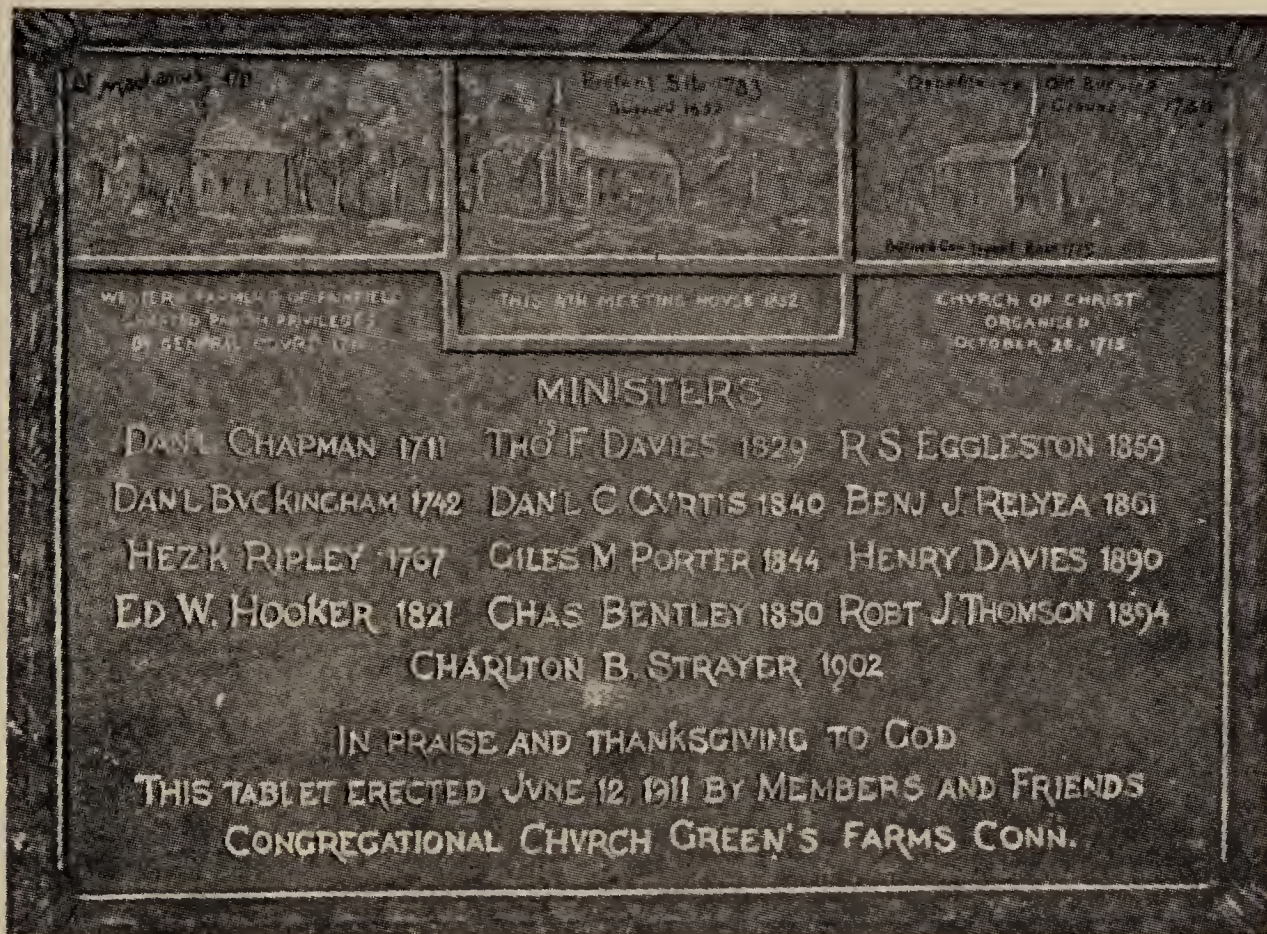
Greens Farms, Connecticut

In May, 1711, by order of the General Court, the West Parish of Fairfield was established. The committee set the eastern bounds at Sturges Highway and Sasco River; south, Long Island Sound; west, the dividend line between Fairfield and Norwalk; north, Redding.

On June 12, 1711, was held the first parish meeting. At this meeting John Andrews was chosen recorder and 70 pounds were voted as the salary of the Reverend Daniel Chapman as minister. The first Machamux meeting-house was not fully completed but it was used for services. Since that date continuous services have been held in the West Parish of Fairfield, now the Congregational Society of Greens Farms; the fourth meeting-house now being used was built on the site of the third. The continuous records are preserved. Early records contain vital statistics, births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths; nearly a thousand deaths are recorded, each with a brief word or two as to cause—sickness, accident, or military service.

I have traced the names of soldiers from the West Parish who served in the French and Indian Wars, the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish and World Wars, all but the Mexican. Many of these veterans are buried in the Colonial Cemetery and in the Greens Farms Church cemetery. Indian children and negro slaves were among those baptized.

In 1835 the town of Westport was set apart by the



HISTORICAL TABLE, GREENS FARMS CHURCH



SILVER COMMUNION SERVICE

Dating from about 1712

The Fairfield West Parish

General Assembly of Connecticut and to accomplish this the Fairfield West Parish gave its consent for it held more or less authority in town matters. The building of the turnpike in 1800 made a new thoroughfare through the parish and changed somewhat the highway intersections. Near the close of the century a new means of transportation was built on this highway—the electric trolley line. A little later the road-bed was hard surfaced as a state highway and today it sustains a very large automobile and truck travel to and through Connecticut. The large old house standing on the Post Road near Turkey Hill, long known as the Lamberton House, was the toll gate even back to the days of the stage coach.

Topography of the West Parish

NORTH of the present Long Lots Road the land rises to an elevated plateau intersected by valleys and little streams. This elevated land continues northerly and northeasterly to where it dips abruptly down into the valley of the Aspetuck River, outside the confines of the territory we are considering. From this elevated plateau there is a wide range of vision over intervening hills and lowlands and out to Long Island Sound. To the northwest the highlands dip sharply and stretch over into the Hockanum Plains, which appear to have once been the bed of a bay whose northerly shore rose abruptly into the wide expanse of hills of Weston and Wilton.

To the south of Long Lots Road three parallel hills, Turkey, Clapboard, and Benjamin, point toward the sea, and further west the plateau stretches down through Hill's woods and Compo Hill to Compo. Turkey Hill we can visualize as the abode of wild turkeys in the early time; Clapboard Hill we must surmise to have been the source of straight-grained riving timber for the clapboard covering of the early houses; Benjamin Hill was probably named for Benjamin Rumsey who once lived on its southern slope, and in whose house school was kept.

Below these foothills is a plain of gravelly and sandy

Topography of the West Parish

loam reaching down to the waters of the Sound, while at the foot of Long Hill, which is the extension of Clapboard Hill, there is a wide expanse of salt-meadow land extending to the beach. On one side of Long Hill is a system of creeks formed by the tidal inlet of New Creek; on the other is an expanse of some 80 acres of salt meadow, with numerous circling creeks all connected with Gallup Gap Creek.

Before 1835 the proprietors of the old Compo Tide Mill succeeded in closing Gallup Gap Creek, thereby turning its waters into Compo Pond. Then the salt-meadow proprietors, in righteous indignation, dug a ditch known as "Long Ditch," some 500 feet, connecting Gallup Gap Creek from the west with the Greens Farms and New Creek system on the east. This they had a right to do as they were on their own land. The ditch was comparatively narrow when dug, for I remember that as a boy I was able to jump across it. In recent years this ditch has widened into a canal a rod wide and ten feet deep.

All this plain land and salt-meadow land was formed by terminal moraines when the great ice cap was receding. We see many indications of the action of the ice cap on these plain lands in the gravel and sandy knolls and pot holes. Some of these pot holes become never-failing ponds of water with neither inlets nor outlets. One may be seen on the Bulkley property over near Sasco River. Another is in the front yard

Greens Farms, Connecticut

of Miss Lillian Wald in Compo. From these plain lands have been cleaned off many boulders, rounded and showing the force of the grinding action of the ice cap. Mr. E. C. Birge dug up on his farm one quartz stone 18 inches by 12 inches, rounded and polished to a perfect egg shape. Close to these rounded boulders would lie other irregular sharp-edged rocks, carried down on the ice many miles from the parent ledge. At Roseville, at Hill's Woods in Compo, and on Cross Highway at Bayberry Lane, the soil has been completely scraped off the original rock bed and we can see scratchings on the rock surface by the glacial ice. Up on North Avenue on the Corbin farm (the old Huldah Meeker place), the water sheds in three directions. From the east part of the field it flows eastward and eventually into Muddy Brook; from the north part into Dead Man's Brook near Mrs. Charles B. Meeker's home; from the southwesterly part, down into Burr's Pond and on into the little brook back of the old academy. A topographical casuist claims that if a well-sharpened pencil were stuck in the ground at the correct spot, a raindrop falling on it and splitting would take these three several courses in its passage to the Sound.

The Greens Farms streams are interesting. Sasco River rises up in Quasset in the northwestern corner of Fairfield, flows southerly between Merwin's Lane and Sturges Highway to Long Lots, whence it is the bound-



COMPO COVE AND OLD TIDE MILL

About 1885

Topography of the West Parish

ary line between Westport and Fairfield to the sea. Dead Man's Brook rises above Cross Highway and flows southwesterly, bisecting Roseville, skirting the Westport Sanitarium grounds, crossing Evergreen and Myrtle Avenues, the Post Road at Bay Street, and is swallowed up by the river near Imperial Avenue. Muddy Brook (Werrappamaucke), the present name being erroneous since its clear waters are from pure springs and rivulets flowing in from either side, rises near Cross Highway, meanders in a southwesterly direction across the whole of Greens Farms until it loses itself in the Compaug Creek that "runneth down through the salt meadows"; winding through Compo Pond, it enters the Sound where the old Tide Mill formerly stood. Muddy Brook probably got its name from the fording place where its waters unite with Compo Creek. Prior to the Revolution, when the church and the school were just west of the stream banks, the fording place seems to have been at the civic centre. The meanderings of the stream have been expensive to the town, for seven bridges have been necessary. Ever a stickler for style, the stream has demanded the latest fashions in bridges; within the lifetime of the writer they have changed from the stone of the Revolutionary period to the wood of the Civil War era, and later to the durable cement of the automobile age. In one of these new bridges is still preserved a part of the post-Revolutionary structure;

Greens Farms, Connecticut

this is in the Morningside Drive bridge near the Greens Farms school. Near this is the point where Muddy Brook crosses the Post Road, where, on the north side of the highway, it is fed abundantly by a noted spring, Port Royal. This was a favorite drinking place for the scholars at the academy and for the West Long Lots district school for more than two generations. Up in the great swamp of the former Birge farm above Long Lots is another famous spring generously feeding the brook. This spring never freezes in the coldest weather, and there is reputed to be a bottle of whiskey somewhere in the depths due to a string—that broke.

Early Industries

THESE early farmers were largely stockmen, breeding cattle, sheep, horses, and swine. The strains were replenished by importations from the old country. The cattle were pastured in a town herd, the horses in the horse pasture, and the sheep were kept within fences near home. The farmers butchered and cured their own fresh beef and pork, and had fresh mutton and poultry and wild game. Salted beef and pork were the mainstays. A limited variety of vegetables and fruit, principally potatoes and apples, were the winter supply. The making of wool into clothing was one of the industries of the women; another was the making of linen from flax. Hemp was also raised and manufactured into rope, sails, and men's coarser clothing.

In the fall cider making was a lucrative business; cider was a popular colonial beverage, possibly because it was the only way to prevent the waste of so many apples. Nothing was wasted in the colonies, and apples were plentiful. Our soil has always been adapted to the growth of apples, although until quite recently the farmers usually set out their orchards on steep, remote side hills which made cultivation impossible and harvesting dangerous, while the fertile

Greens Farms, Connecticut

convenient flat lands were used almost exclusively, in the early years, for cattle.

It was good grazing ground, the many brooks supplied sweet water, and the salt meadows, self-fertilized, yielded bountiful crops of salt grass and black grass, both excellent cattle fodder in the winter.

At first it was feared that the rigorous New England winter would be a serious handicap to the cattle industry, but liberally bedded down in yard and stable with salt hay, the livestock wintered in comfort, and by spring there were heaping barnyards of coarse manure. Even before the farmer knew the necessity of humus in the soil, in order to clear his cattle sheds he was returning to his fields a liberal compensation for the leaf mold which had been the wealth of the pioneer, and of which he had robbed the soil for his grain crops. Thus husbandry was developing from the time of the settler through that of his children and grandchildren.

During the post-Revolutionary period the farmer was clearing from his fields the rocks of the glacial age, and building a network of stone fences. From the outcropping ledges and stony hillsides he was able to pry out great slabs of flat stone which he used in building water courses. When a house was to be built, the hearthstone was the first consideration. This must be a slab 6 to 9 feet long, from 3 to 5 feet wide, and if possible 6 inches thick, smoothed and shaped to fit the fireplace. Around the hearthstone the fire-

Early Industries

place was built, and to one side, the bake oven. From this foundation rose the chimney, of stone in the old days, but later of brick.

There was a community spirit of co-operation among these early farmers, for they clubbed together in cutting and hauling logs for their houses and in digging out the rocks, in building the fences, the cart paths, and bridges.

For more than two and a half centuries after the settlement of Bankside in 1648 Greens Farms prospered as an agricultural community. Indeed during all this time it occupied a front rank in the contemporary agriculture of the state.

The early centre of population was around the Green or Common, sometimes called the Parade Ground, at the southern end of Clapboard Hill. According to a United States geodetic survey map of 1835 this green appears to have extended in a southeasterly-northwesterly direction and was approximately 250 feet wide by 750 feet long, or about two and one-third acres. The first schoolhouse was here built in 1703 and the first meeting-house in 1711. The last town-owned remnant of this historic common is the bit of land on which is set the Memorial Boulder. Why succeeding generations allowed this heritage of their fathers to slip from an indifferent grasp is something to be wondered at. But this settlement was unlike most of the others. During the centuries following

Greens Farms, Connecticut

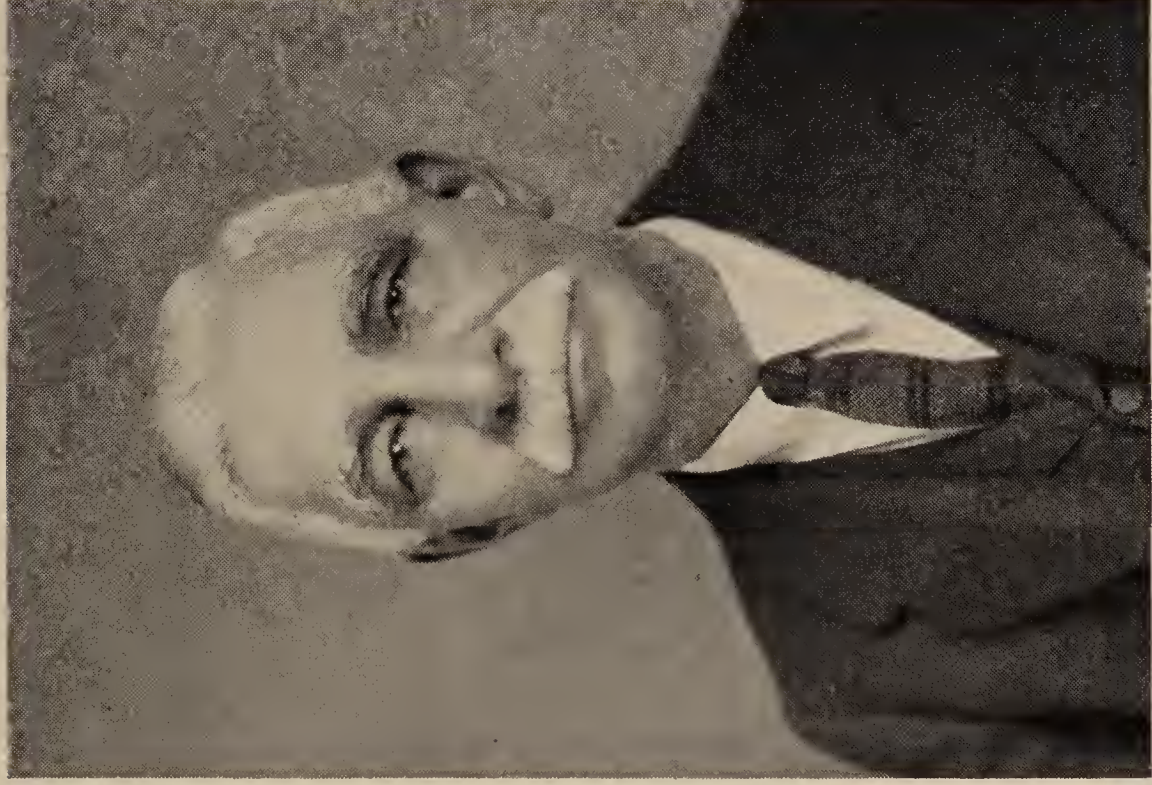
there was never a well-defined centre of population or business, no "Main Street"—the mainspring of other towns-and-cities-to-be. The westward drift of population pulled the church and schoolhouse to Muddy Brook; then the church was moved still further north and the school was divided and scattered to meet new conditions. Only the church held the people together in a common band of union; that is why, largely, the history of the Congregational Church of Greens Farms essentially covers the activities, the joys, and sorrows of the entire parish almost down to the present time.

Until the Civil War there was no railroad station nor post office. Nearby villages on the harbors on each side gave adequate service in trade, and in professional service excepting that of the minister and of the schoolmaster. The following anecdote illustrates the rural conditions of the place:

Approximately in the year 1860 a candidate for the pastorate of the Greens Farms church came up from Brooklyn to preach. He and his wife were city bred, but because of their large family of growing children he sought a more rural atmosphere. Arriving here he found a well-filled church of progressive, responsive people, no doubt as wealthy a church as could be found outside of the larger towns in the State. He returned to Brooklyn very favorably impressed with his reception and the opportunity. His wife, after the



REVEREND BENJAMIN J. RELYEA
Pastor, Greens Farms Church, 1861-1888



GEORGE PENFIELD JENNINGS
1855-1933

Early Industries

manner of ministers' wives, anxiously inquired what sort of a place he had found. He liked his joke, and, putting on a long face, told her that there was just a lot of farmers, that there was not a lawyer nor a doctor in the community, nor a professional man of any kind whatsoever except the teacher of the academy. There was no post office, no railway station, not even a store. Having let her down to these depths, he began painting the other side of the picture. The outcome was that he accepted a call to the church, and for twenty-seven years the Reverend Benjamin J. Relyea was the beloved pastor of the church here while his family developed as an integral part of the community.

Revolutionary Days

GENERAL TRYON's raid and the burning of Fairfield, the 7th of July, 1779, was followed on the next day by the burning through Greens Farms from the Sasco River westerly along the Country Road (now Greens Farms Road) to the community centre around the old green or common and the southern slope of Clapboard Hill. The Jesup Homestead on the common was destroyed but the good deacon saved the church silver communion service by dropping the contents in a bag down his well. The Andrews house on the home-lot of Elmstead of six acres where the author lives was included in the burning.

Mrs. Eben Sherwood, who was an Andrews, related to me the following over sixty years ago about this house. Madam Andrews, whose husband was in the Continental Army, was alone with her children. She heard of the raid and burning. She turned her stock loose, saddled her horse, and, taking her young children, drove her stock up country. A reference is made to the burning of Mrs. Abigail Jennings's tavern. I have been unable to locate this tavern, but the public then by intuition could divine the route.

Continuing westerly along the Country Road, Doctor Hezekiah Ripley's homestead was the next to fall

Revolutionary Days

to the British torch. After the raid was over, Doctor Ripley secured a barn frame all hewed and framed in Weston, and rebuilt his homestead, now the property of Mr. Howard Brubaker.

The parish records do not mention the burning of the meeting-house, but a vote was passed to hold services the coming year in William Burr's home on Long Lots Road, so this colonial meeting-house, which then stood just beyond Muddy Brook opposite the Colonial Burying Ground, was destroyed. In all, 15 dwelling houses, 11 barns, and several stores went up in flames.

Today we have no animosity that this parish meeting-house was burned by the British, but rejoice that the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack float side by side standing for peace, civilization, humanity, arbitration, and Christianity around the world.

After the burning of the community centre around the green, the population spread out in various directions throughout the parish, and since then there has been no well defined commercial centre.

Quoting from old records:

"A Fairfield town meeting October 31, (during the Revolutionary War) voted that there be a guard of 26 men to guard the town nightly, and every night to be set in the manner following, viz.: 4 to patrol from the Saugatuck River to Cable's Mill and from said Mill to Sasco River."

The following is a copy from the original impress,

Greens Farms, Connecticut

which document has been handed down and is now in the possession of Arnold Schleat, Esq., the present owner of the Thomas Hill property at Compo:

“To Either of the Constables of ye Town of Fairfield—

“Greeting . . .

“Whereas Complaint hath this Day been made to me the Authority Subscribing by Nath’l Wilson Barrak—Master for ye town of Fairfield that the guard at Compo has no Barrak and that Doc’t Thomas Hills house is ye Most Convenient place for Safty of said Guard and the Inhabitants—These are therefore in the Name of ye Governor and Company of the State of Connecticut to Command you forthwith to Impress the East room in said Hills house and Place ye said Guard in said East room and order ye Sarjent of s’d Guard to Improve ye same as a Barrak for said Guard ten Days from ye Date here of unless otherways ordered fail not but of this Writ with your doings thereon Make—Due Return Dated at Fairfield this 25th Day of October A. D. 1780.

ABRA’M ANDREWS Jus. peace”

“The Returns from the Constable:

“In Fairfield on the 25th Day of October 1780 then by Vartue of the within Impress I impressed the East Room of Doctor Thomas Hills House at Compo for the Space of ten Days for the use of the Gard where



THE NATHANIEL L. HILL HOUSE

Showing the lean-to used as a barracks

From a painting by John B. Morris, Jr.



SOU'EASTER, FROST POINT

Revolutionary Days

the Said Gard are Posted and Placed John Crosman
thereas Sargant of the Gard to Improve the Same as
A gard house for the Space of the Said ten Days.

Attest Benj'm Rumsey Constabel

fees and time Spent 9s: Od Silver at 6s 8d pr ounce.”

The Fulling Mill

As the country road, like a creeping vine, encircles the foot of Clapboard Hill, bud after bud of a developing community springs to life upon its fertile stem. First there was the church and school-house on the common, then the parsonage, which in those days was the Executive Mansion of the settlement, then the blacksmith shop, with the dwellings of the settlers interspersed between. Still westerly in its course around the hill is the ford of Muddy Brook where the brook enters tide water.

On the brook, just above the ford, another bud of the community life appears—a carding and fulling mill. The brook for much of the year furnished water enough for this incipient factory. The remains of the dam are still visible. As the blacksmith shop catered mostly to the needs of the men, so the mill for carding and fulling textiles was to lighten the labors of the women. The textile industry was largely a feminine responsibility.

I am able to confirm the location of this mill by an old record, which says: “In regards to the ‘Fulling Mill’ property conveyed to Stephen Wakeman, jr., 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ acres at Greens Farms at a place where Gideon Hurlburt’s fulling mill stood, bounded westerly by highway, southerly by the country road (West Parish

The Fulling Mill

Road, near the present Greens Farms Fire House) and northerly on land laid out to Dennie Chapman. The Chapman land was conveyed by Dennie Chapman to John Phillips April 7 1774." A hundred years later the land of the northern boundary was still in the Phillips family for the writer remembers a Widow Phillips, still living on the property with her adopted daughter, Sarah L. Hyatt Sherwood, the wife of Judge Silas B. Sherwood.

Connecticut, as early as 1640, enacted laws encouraging and regulating the cultivation of hemp and flax for cordage and clothing, and the improvement of sheep. In 1660 these animals were freed from taxes paid on other cattle, and the grounds were ordered cleared and fenced for their pasturage. Our early planters raised few sheep. The men clipped and washed the fleece, while the wives and daughters made yarn and wove the coarse fabrics on the hand-loom. The wool, after washing, was combed as straight as possible by hand-cards with wooden backs and wire teeth set in sole-leather. The wool came from the hand-card in a long soft roll, and was then spun upon the spinning-wheel, so much affected in the present day by the devotees of the antique. The large wheel caused a small spindle to revolve at great speed, and the spindle gave to the yarn the proper twist while the nimble fingers of the operator drew it out to the desired size. Then followed the weaving on hand-

Greens Farms, Connecticut

looms, and the dyeing and fulling by hand. The long winter evenings were spent in weaving. Machinery was yet to come to give women leisure to improve themselves as they are now doing.

As time passed, while home spinning went on, to aid in the other textile processes, the men erected on water-power streams carding mills with the necessary machinery to do the carding. Then followed the fulling mill, which also required plenty of water from the running stream. After it had been woven, the cloth was prepared in the fulling mill for the clothing manufacture.

The technical explanation of fulling is: "a process applied to certain fabrics, composed in part or entirely of animal fibres. It shrinks, thickens, and makes the goods more compact. . . . The process of cleansing and shrinking cloth by means of moist heat and pressure. . . . The object of fulling is to work the fibres so that the surface may not show the naked transverse threads, but form a felted mass. . . ." These carding and fulling mills did custom work for the farmers and lightened the textile labors of the women.

Fuller's earth is "a species of clay. It is usually opaque, very soft, and feels greasy. It is used by fullers to take grease out of cloth before they apply the soap." The old method of fulling cloth was to knead it with the feet, hence come our surnames of Fuller, Walker, and Trucker.

The Fulling Mill

Flax was grown by every planter and required a variety of operations to prepare it for spinning—pulling the flax, washing, breaking, swingeling, hatchling, spinning, and weaving. All this is back of every piece of old linen.

Hemp was cultivated, and its growth and manufacture encouraged. Cordage and coarse sacking were made from it. But the methods of local handling seem to have slipped away into oblivion.

The Eli Couch Cider Mill

WITH our forefathers, when the corn was in the shock, the frost on the pumpkin vines, and the "*honk, honk, honk*" of the wild geese airplaning to the Southland, all politics were shunted into the cart rut, and the subject of cider-making was on tap. Cider-making and the merits of the different cider mills were talked about at all firesides, at the village store, and after church service around the horsesheds.

Our forefathers were a hard-working folk. Just look at the land cleared of stones and boulders and built into stone walls and now moss-covered for a century! They were thrifty, for they planted apple trees around their farmsteads. Many of these old apple trees are still standing and bearing fruit, although the homesteads are gone as well as the descendants of the early families. One variety of apple was the Pound Sweet, taking the place of bananas as now used. When those Sweets were baked in the old brick ovens, the juice oozed out, and in the process became a delicious syrup. Others were Fall Pippins, as large as your two fists, yellow and juicy, and equal in flavor to the McIntosh Red and the English Russets; they were long-keeping and added flavor to the cider. Buck Meadows, sometimes water-cored, but



THE ELI COUCH CIDER MILL

From a painting made especially for this volume by John B. Morris, Jr.

The Eli Couch Cider Mill

with a flavor of the meadows, the bakers of a spicy taste, and later our prized Baldwin and Rhode Island Greenings completed the story. Such apples made the cider. The housewife boiled down the cider for culinary purposes, one of which was the making of apple butter. All honor to our Connecticut mothers who showed their independence and thrift by using boiled cider in place of imported brandy in flavoring their mince pies, or using the home-made wooden nutmeg in seasoning their pumpkin pies.

One of my earliest recollections was a cider mill then owned by the late Eli Couch of this place. It was located on West Parish Road near Center Street. If the Federal or Third Meeting-House, built just after the Revolutionary War, had occupied the site as "staked out" by the Committee of the General Court of Connecticut, the two would have stood side by side.

This cider mill was under a circular roof, some 30 feet in diameter, with a centre post for support. A circular water-tight trough was built around this support, resting on the ground. This was about 25 feet in diameter and one and one-half feet in depth and width. A wooden wheel some 5 or 6 feet in diameter rolled around in the trough on the axle or sweep; the other end of the sweep turned around the upright support. A horse was hitched to this sweep and driven round and round. The apples were put into the trough and the wheel, in its rotation, crushed the

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apples into pumice, which was left until the next day and then put into the press. The laying up of the cheese of apple-pumice with rye straw for squeezing was an art.

The older connoisseurs always said the cider made by the above process was superior to that made in the mills, where the apples were grated or ground. I have heard old people refer to the cider mill as "the press," and I had the impression that the earliest squeezing of the cheese was by levers rather than by screws, but the late B. F. Bulkley, Sr., who has been in the mill business for years, says not. Mr. Bulkley has shown me the old wooden screws that were used in his cider press before iron screws were made.

A very old water-power and mill privilege was developed on the Sasco River near the Post Road, which has long since been in the Bulkley family. In addition to the cider mill, the Bulkleys had a sawmill and machine shop, while at one time they manufactured saddle-trees. Some years ago when the sawmill was dismantled, Mr. Bulkley, then eighty years old, remarked that that was the last of the sawmills in this community.

In this connection I want to mention the Batterson blacksmith shop, on the Post Road near Roseville, which appears to have continued the old original blacksmith shop conducted by Thomas Nash way back in about 1718, at the "Hot Hole."

The Tide Mill at Compo

IN early colonial times many streams emptying into Long Island Sound were used as tide-water power sites for gristmills, especially if there were good-sized ponds or creeks to hold the water. Compo Creek was such a location; its outlet to the beach was protected on each side by higher banks of sand, thus making a dam where flood-gates were installed to allow the water to flow into the pond, and when the tide ebbed the gates closed, keeping the water within the pond. Compo Cove where the mill was located was protected from the coast by Sherwood Point on the east, and on the south and southwest by Puggs Knoll, Hills Point, and Cedar Point, thus forming a safe harbor.

For fifty years the Bankside farmers had used the gristmills on Mill River, Southport, but as the settlement moved northward and westward toward the Saugatuck, the farmers saw the advantage of a mill in their neighborhood. Gallup Gap Creek and Compo Creek furnished a large pond for the mill.

In 1703 a Mr. Whitney was granted the right to build a mill on this outlet, but for some unknown reason he did not carry out the bargain. In 1705 the town of Fairfield entered into an agreement with Thomas Oakley. In September of the same year Mr.

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Oakley sold out his mill rights to John Cable, who built the mill. This deed of transfer was not recorded until a considerably later date.

The following is a copy of the original record of Mr. Oakley's application and the terms under which he was permitted to build the mill:

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD (1705)

“Whereas the towns of Fairfield have granted liberty to Thomas Oakley of Westchester to erect a grist-mill or mills upon Compo Creek within the bounds of Fairfield upon conditions mentioned in the said grant.

“One, whereof, is he agrees to such articles with reference to said mill or mills as to situations and toll, and everything else proper to the premises, with us, Peter Burr, Joseph Lockwood, and Samuel Couch, as a committee appointed by said town for the affair, as may more fully appear by the records of said town bearing date, April 17th, 1705.

“Now know all men that the said Thomas Oakley hath agreed with us, the above committee, and does hereby covenant, promise and bind himself and his successors in the said mill or mills, to secure all such grain as shall be brought to said mill or mills by any inhabitant or inhabitants of the said town of Fairfield at all times, and grind the same seasonably before he or they shall grind for a stranger, into good, sufficient



TIDE MILL AT COMPO

Burned about 1895

From a photograph loaned by Judge Joseph Morton



WILL SHERWOOD'S YOKE OF OXEN

The Tide Mill at Compo

meal, taking only a sixteenth part for toll, also to keep the said mill or mills continually in good repair after the time mentioned in said grant for accomplishing the same, or, if the said mill be at any time out of repair he or they shall, as conveniently may be, repair the same again, or in case he or they fail thereof, the said mill or mills, or what shall remain of the same, the dam, and all other appurtenances of said mill or mills to be at the command of the said town of Fairfield, provided they will pay to him, the said Oakley, or his successors in the said mill or mills the value, thereof, and that the stream is not to be counted an appurtenance of the mill, but in case of the failure above mentioned the stream to be free at the said town's command.

“Recorded, January 15th, 1706”

Shortly after building the mill it was discovered that Gallup Gap Creek drew off the water of the pond into the Sound east of Sherwood Island, so in 1715 the proprietors of Sherwood Island contracted with a Mr. Seeley of Newtown to build a dam across Gallup Gap Creek, just south of the present bridge to the island. As a proof that such a dam was built, some years ago when the Westport Water Company was extending a pipe line out to Sherwood Island, the men dug into one of the log cribs used in constructing this dam. Mr. John H. Elwood secured this piece of oak

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log that had lain in the mud for two hundred and twenty years.

The Sherwoods acquired the mill and when it burned, at the close of the eighteenth century, they rebuilt it a few years later, at the same time erecting the substantial breakwater and sluice gates. From their own virgin forests north of Compo they hewed out great timbers for the construction work. The mill was in existence until about 1895 when it burned.

The Sherwoods developed a valuable industry for the farmers of this vicinity, and also in buying and shipping grain. Their mill specialized in grinding kiln-dried corn meal for shipment to the West Indies. Coasting and packet vessels came in and loaded at the mill. Here, too, was a large cooper shop for the making of barrels. I remember seeing some of the large iron pans, 10 to 20 feet square, for the drying of the meal. It was related to me, years ago, that Mr. Eben Sherwood found Sunday the best day to buy up corn around the meeting-house.

By 1860 farming had changed; less grain was raised, and the gristmilling and kiln-dried corn meal were out of date. The mill stood idle. Then for a number of years barytes, a mineral substance, was ground. This was brought in barrels in vessels and ground exceedingly fine and repacked in barrels of six hundred pounds, and shipped away for various commercial purposes.

The Tide Mill at Compo

The tide mill had an undershot horizontal water-wheel—that is, the outflow of water turned the wheel by the force of the water against the under part of the wheel. The water-wheel was some 18 feet long and about 14 feet in diameter, located outside the mill, and when the gates were lifted the water flowed out with tremendous force, and power was transmitted into the mill. If milling was good, two shifts, night and day, were needed according to the tide. The tide must be ebbing before the mill wheel would run, and continue till the incoming tide equalled the outflow from the pond. The old proprietors, Eben and Daniel Sherwood, were of a milling family for five generations from England.

Negro Slaves

NOTWITHSTANDING the supposed equality in the North as contrasted with the patrician atmosphere of the Southern plantations, there were yet three strata in New England society. Bankside society recognized three strata, too, as soon as it became prosperous enough to make class consciousness possible. Those who had forged ahead and acquired success in business, profession, or politics, and in careers less pretentious, were bound to be looked up to; as their material prosperity became assured their sense of self-importance gave them a certain seasoned dignity which affected their standing in the community, and in most cases they were respected, their less fortunate neighbors taking pride in their attainments. While other communities had their doctors, judges, and teachers, Greens Farms had its Esquires—or “Squares” as our independent fathers called them—and its Captains, while above all was the Reverend. But the majority of our people, whose lot it had been to do the drudgery and everyday work of life, were simple, unadorned Bill and Sam. Still even a lower level existed—the negro slaves.

John Green, one of the Bankside farmers, by deed in 1699 gave his negro, Harry, his freedom after his own decease, provided said Harry served five years

Know all Men by these presents that I David
Breadwell of y^e Town of ~~the~~ County of Fairfield
for the Consideration of twenty Eight pounds
Lawful Money in hand paid of John the
of S. Fairfield which is to my full satisfaction
Do Content have sold and Do by these presents sell
All and Convey & Confirm & make over my Negro
Gard ~~now~~ unto the S. John the & his heirs and
Assigns for ever to have hold use & Enjoy y^e said
Negro Gard from me my heirs or Executors affirming y^e
I have good Right to S. Negro Gard & in my self full
power & lawful Authority to sell & dispose of said
Gard as above said in Witness whereof I have
hereunto set my hand & Seal this 3rd day of June
AD 1788 Signed in Presence
of Joseph Strong
Deborah Strong David Treble

BILL OF SALE OF A NEGRO SLAVE "GARL," 1788

From the original in the possession of Miss Dorothy R. Adams

Negro Slaves

to any master of his own choosing for 20 pounds, which 20 pounds were to be added to Green's estate as part pay for his son's education and for board to his father-in-law, Hobby. "Then the said Negro which is now my negro, shall be a free negro and his own man for himself."

Negro slaves were owned by many of the proprietors. However, it was a mild form of slavery, and there were but a few slaves on each farm. Slave labor in the North never was an important enough factor to smudge a debasing fringe upon the free labor of the whites, and in 1848 slavery was forever abolished in Connecticut. But many negro people continued to live in Greens Farms as respected residents. Charles Roe, the last of the slaves, was sexton of the third meeting-house, that was burned in 1852. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Monroe lived in the Aaron Lockwood house and were regular attendants at the church, under the pastorate of Mr. Relyea. They owned their own horse and buggy, and lived a self-sustaining life on their little farm. Mrs. Monroe was once heard to remark, not very complimentarily, on some of her white neighbors' "driving down to the village to get rum." They were superior in moral outlook to some of their white neighbors.

Aunt Lazette Hyde lived in her own little house on the back road off the Turnpike, now the home of Michael Bowers. Notwithstanding her pipe, which

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Mr. Birge remembers her smoking as she sat in his grandmother's kitchen, telling stories and gossiping with great gusto with his grandmother and Aunt Betsey, Aunt Zette had the dignity and manner of a cultured lady, for she had served in the family of the Norwalk Bissels and the Jesups. Her name indicates that she came from slaves of the Hyde family. She always considered herself a part of the family and was loyal to it, and was held in deep affection by the grandchildren, who looked up to her in true Southern "mammy" fashion.

Men of the Sea

THE West Parish of Fairfield, which included Greens Farms, Compo, and the present town of Wesptort to the Saugatuck River, has furnished many renowned men who followed the sea. From the earliest colonial times the local transportation of the shore towns was by vessel. The products of the forests and farms were shipped by packet to New Haven, Providence, Boston, and New York.

The Connecticut shore, indented by many tidal creeks and rivers where the ebb and flow of the tides ranged from three to eight feet, made harbors for ships of light draft. In the early times the country roads were only cart paths, with little inter-town transportation by wheeled vehicles. So it was quite natural that young men, growing up and living by the seaway of the Sound, should ship before the mast.

In the beginnings of our coasting and ocean-carrying trade for the last century, our virgin forests contained trees suitable for ship-building, and pine trees for masts. Many small waterfalls provided water power to operate the old-fashioned up-and-down sawmills. There were sturdy oaks for keel and planking, locusts for knees, stanchions, and trunnels. There were many shipyards and the trade of shipwright and carpenter was a good one. Careful search was made for trees

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with crooks and bends that, when hewed out, fitted into place without steaming or bending. It is reported to me by Benjamin F. Bulkley, Sr., nearer ninety than eighty years of age when he died, that a small sailing vessel was built on the Sasco River, just below his mill on the Post Road.

For the men of the sea I have always had great respect. Some of these men hailing from Greens Farms that I have known are the Sherwoods—Franklin, Frederick, and Francis, triplets, all deep-sea captains. Captain Franklin commanded the brig *Carolina* and owned one-fourth share of her. Captain Charles Allen of Compo, whose last ship, *Francis Burritt*, built in Saugatuck about 1850, was laid up at Gray's Creek on the Saugatuck River in 1875, had two sons, Captain Charles H. Allen and Sereno Gould Allen, who, after sailing various packet vessels out of Saugatuck and Westport, had built the steamer *Sarah Thorpe* for Westport and New York trade. At that time New York freighting was on the wane, being largely carried by railway.

Captain John B. Elwood of Greens Farms commanded the schooner *Connecticut*, sailing from New York to New Orleans in 1840. Captain Elwood brought up a large family here, all the members of which took a prominent place in the social life of the community.

Two brothers, Captains John and Peter Bulkley,

Men of the Sea

whose home was then on the Country Road, near Bulkley Avenue, Greens Farms, sailed coasting schooners from Westport. Abram Sherwood, a brother of the triplets already mentioned, ran a packet line to and from Westport and New York. One of his cargoes was fifty kegs of powder for merchants in Danbury.

Captain Lewis Hale was commander of the fastest clipper ship sailing out of Boston to Mediterranean ports bringing in tropical fruits. Captain Henry Pier-son Burr, son of Daniel Burr of Greens Farms, commanded the first American ship to enter Japanese ports after they were opened to the commerce of the West. Captain Hezekiah Elwood, born in Greens Farms, sailed the *Mary Elizabeth*, of the Jennings Line, between Southport and New York in the market trade. Many thousands of barrels of onions and mixed loads of vegetables and farm produce were handled each season, and sales of produce returned, without the loss of ship or of the money during his lifetime.

Captain Ebenezer Allen ran the schooner *Remsen* between Southport and New York in the market trade starting about 1883. This old schooner finally was allowed to rot on the mudflats just below the Saugatuck carriage-bridge; its hulk can still be outlined in the mud at low tide.

Captain Charles H. Jennings of Greens Farms followed the coasting trade for some years in his younger life, later marrying a daughter of Captain Charles

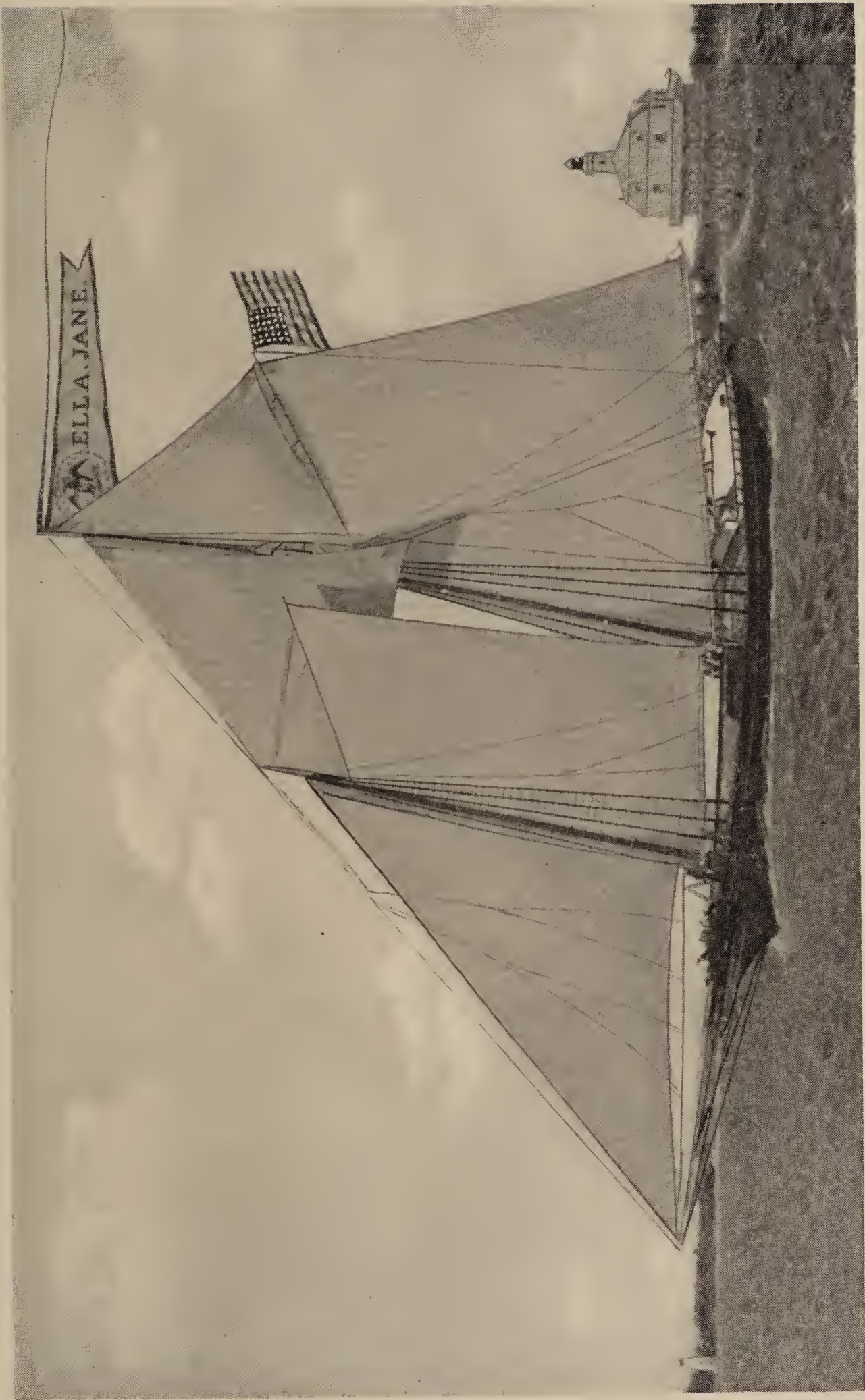
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Allen of Compo and settling down as a farmer on Long Lots Road.

The schooner *Ella Jane* (see picture opposite) was built in Nyack, N. Y., in 1855, as a sloop rig for lumber freighting on the Hudson River, but was changed to a schooner rig, and was owned by Captain Charles H. Allen of Black Rock, formerly of Compo. He sailed the boat in the packet trade between Bridgeport and New York. Later his son, Charles Thorpe Allen, commanded this vessel, and from him I was able to obtain this information. *Ella Jane* was the fastest sailer on the Sound; notice the pennant, won in a race, flying from the masthead.

The last of the captains of the market vessels is Increase A. Parsell, who came to Greens Farms in 1865. Beginning as an onion grower on the fieldlands of Andrew W. Jennings, he had a hankering for the sea, and bought an oyster sloop. He became Captain of the Meeker Line out of Southport, 1900-05; he then took the steamer *Capt. Depoy* for three years, and then retired for life, taking up farming. Captain Parsell and his wife still reside on Maple Lane; a few years back their son, Alan, married the last descendant now living in these parts of Simon Couch, the sixth of the first original settler in Machamux.

I have studied the wages paid as shown in the shipping books and find that the captain was paid \$50.00 per month, with a small commission for passengers



THE ELLA JANE

Fastest packet boat on the Sound

From the original by courtesy of Captain C. T. Allen, Greenport, L. I.

Men of the Sea

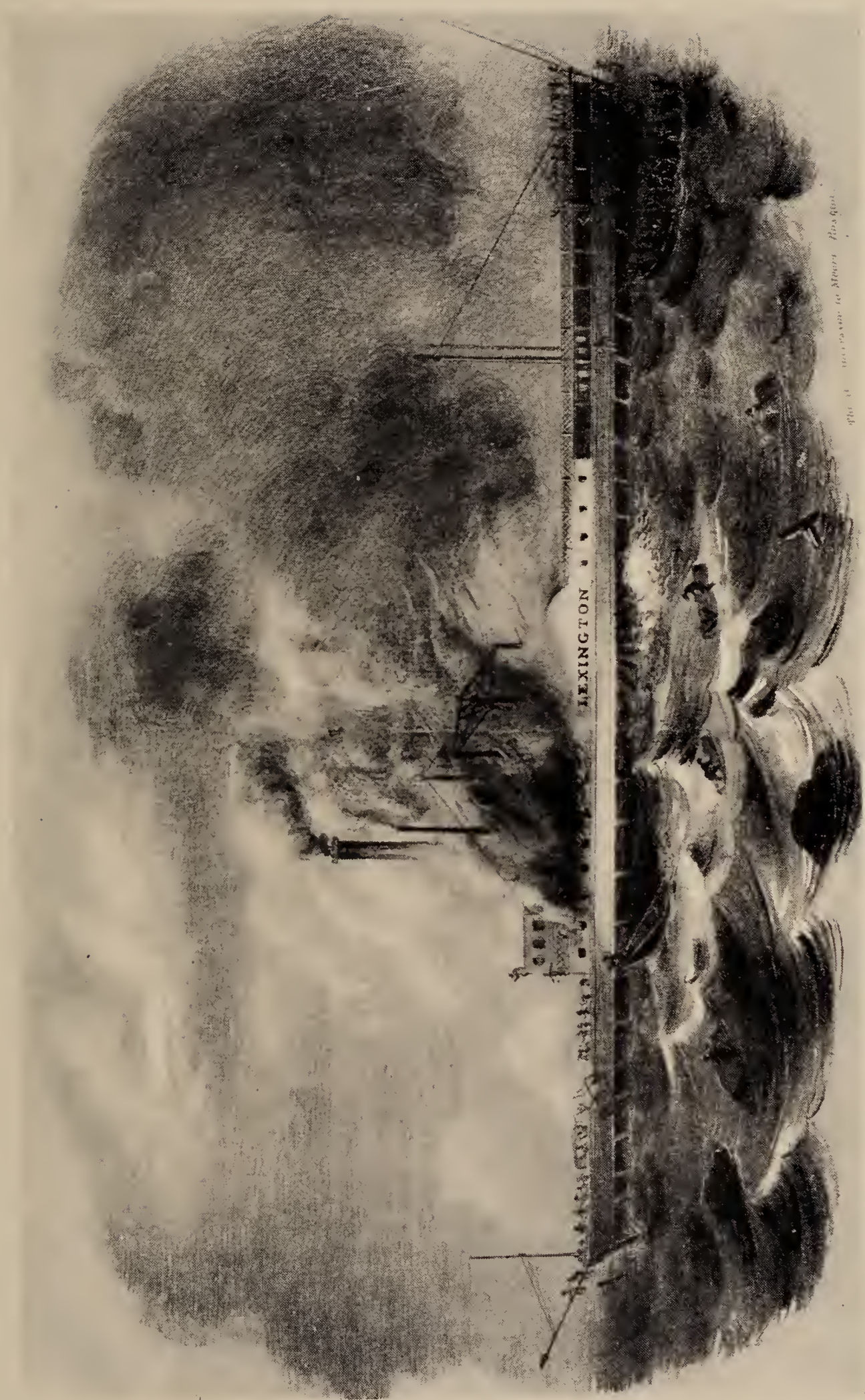
carried; first mate, \$30.00; seamen, \$10.00 to \$20.00 and "found." Captain Franklin Sherwood with his barque *Carolina*, charged for a trip from New York to Charleston, S. C., first class, \$20.00; second class, \$16.00; and steerage, \$6.00. The cargo, northbound, was principally cotton, while the down cargo was largely New England manufactured products and baled hay and cabbage for ship's account. The packet and coasting vessels often went to Albany for lumber and to Perth Amboy for coal.

Now the coasting schooners are rarely seen on the Sound. The old captains hailing from Fairfield, West Parish, and Compo have entered their last port beyond.

Steamboats on the Long Island Sound and the Saugatuck River

JUST over a century ago, in 1826, the New Haven Steamship Company began its route, New Haven and New York. My uncle, Thomas B. Hill, who was a little boy about that time, has told me he had heard that in early times the New Haven boat called at Cedar Point, Compo, to take on passengers for New York. This statement I cannot verify by any one living today, but it seems quite natural that as Westport was a tide-water village where trade from Easton, Newtown, New Milford, and Danbury came for shipping that such would be the case. This line continued for many years; its noon sailings down the Sound were as regular as the clock.

In 1840 on a cold January night, the thirteenth, the steamer *Lexington* from New York bound eastward loaded with cotton, took fire off Eaton's Neck, Long Island. About 140 persons lost their lives. The picture opposite is a reproduction from an engraving made by Thayer of Boston at that time. My father and many others watched the burning of the *Lexington* from the hills along the shore of Greens Farms. It was a bitterly cold night with ice all along the shores, and Southport Harbor was frozen over. The steamboat could have made a landing on the beach if it



BURNING OF THE STEAMBOAT LEXINGTON

January 13, 1840

From original print loaned by Captain Increase A. Parsell

Steamboats on the Long Island Sound

could have been steered, but its connection between the pilot-house and tiller were ropes which soon burned, and so the captain lost all steerage-way. The next morning the Meeker Market boat from Southport cut a channel through the ice and sailed out onto the Sound and circled around. It picked up two or three persons who had saved themselves by floating on bales of cotton.

Captain Lyman Banks of Greens Farms, who owned the farm where Wynfromere Dairy Farm is today, in early times had a steamboat called the *Rush Light*, which he operated on the Saugatuck River and Long Island Sound to New York, but this venture was soon given up. In the two seasons during the closing years of the sixties the Greens Farms people chartered a steamboat that came into the cove at Compo Mill and took the whole community on an excursion to the Thimble Islands beyond New Haven. One night, about thirty-five years ago, the New Haven steamer *C. H. Northam* was rammed just above the water-line, but she made the beach just west of Frost Point.

The breakwater extending out from Cedar Point at Compo was built by the government in 1837 to protect the Saugatuck Harbor from filling up with sand.

Our Burying Grounds

SIMON COUCH, who was the sixth settler at Bank-side, living on the home-lot just west of John Green, was buried on land belonging to him west of Frost Point looking out on the Sound. This he had set aside as a family burial place, and it was long known as the "Couch Burial Hill." This is now our Burial Hill Park. Many of our early settlers lie here for it was generally used as a cemetery until 1725. Mrs. Lorinda Banks Dibble, whose early home was near the old elm tree on the present cove at Bank-side, told me that she had kindred buried on this hill. As a boy I remember many tombstones on this hill, but when the town took it over, in 1893, only one broken headstone remained, also the marking of two or three graves by large round stones placed at the head and foot.

At the Legislature held in the winter of 1893, the Selectmen of Westport, Samuel B. Wheeler, William H. Taylor, and the writer, had a bill presented by its representative, Edward M. Lees, and enacted by the Legislature, to acquire this hill for a town park "as a public park, square or common, for the use and enjoyment of the public under such rules and regulations as may be made by said town." The enactment

Our Burying Grounds

is available in the records of the town of Westport to any who care to study it further.

At a later period Mr. Edward T. Bedford gave some three-quarters of an acre of salt meadow adjoining the park on the north to enlarge the approach and parking space.

A roadway approach was laid out from the Greens Farms Shore Road to the park, which later was somewhat changed in location by mutual arrangement with Mr. Gordon, an adjoining proprietor. The frontage of the park on the water is some 400 feet. A stone breakwater was built when Lewis P. Wakeman was First Selectman of Westport, by Charles Chapman, a contractor.

Burial Hill Park is noteworthy for being the first state organized park on the shore.

A very early burial place is in Compo on a knoll among cedar trees on the west side of Compo Road going along the road south from the Minute Man monument. A few brownstone slabs still stand to mark the final resting place of some early inhabitants. The Compo Hill Chapter D. A. R. of Westport is assuming the care of this old burial ground, lately marking it with a bronze tablet.

About the year 1725 Colonial Burying Ground on the south side of the country road just west of Muddy Brook seems to have been set apart from the common. That it was so set apart seems to be proved by the

Greens Farms, Connecticut

fact that there can be found no deed or gift of this land as a burying place. In the early ministry of the Reverend Hezekiah Ripley, the parish voted to allow him to fence the grounds so as to pasture his sheep thereon.

The identity and location of a piece of land is often established when it bobs up as a boundary of another tract more definitely located. The following description of an adjacent tract is useful in establishing the whereabouts and age of this cemetery—a description of the land forming the late Henry B. Wakeman's homestead, now belonging to Mrs. Frances Manners.

Mr. Lacey of Southport, already quoted, says: "As bearing on the question as to the old burying ground, we find in Vol. 9, page 374, Fairfield, under date of March 12, 1749-50, as follows—'Samuel Burr, Thomas Hill and James Smedley, Committee, surveyed and laid out to Dennie Chapman of Fairfield on the right of Ephraim Jackson's which said Chapman purchased in the second division of Common in Fairfield, 17 acres and 12 rods of land bounded on the west or southwest part on Higgins homestead and part on land belonging to Gideon Hurlburt at Petticoat Lane Point and the southeast with a straight course with the southwest line of said Hurlburt's fence at said point to a creek on the southeast: on the northeast with the burying place to a heap of stones at the Country Road; on the west from said heap of stones to ye northeast cor-

Our Burying Grounds

ner of said Higginses Homestead or common land.' ”

Petticoat Lane is the lane on the west of the Manners property, leading down to Petticoat Point below the railway where this point juts into Compo Pond. The author personally knows that Henry B. Wakeman, who was his uncle, always called a certain lot just north of the railway and near Compo Creek, the “Chapman Point Lot.”

This historical burying place still functions—several old families have maintained their original plots, and scattered about are marked and unmarked graves of our forefathers, and the graves of many of our foreign-born neighbors and friends—all, seventh generation American, or first generation, resting together after lives spent in doing simple and big things for the eventual betterment of Greens Farms.

In 1807, Moses Sherwood gave an acre of land adjoining on the east of the present meeting-house lands for a cemetery, and it was named the Greens Farms Cemetery. Local popular usage long ago dubbed it the “Upper” graveyard, while the Colonial burial place is known commonly as the “Lower” graveyard. We cling to our customs and traditions.

In 1912, Edward Coley Birge gave an added strip two rods wide on the east side of this cemetery as a memorial of his father and mother, the late Deacon Henry and Rachel Coley Birge.

This burial place still functions, though much of the

Greens Farms, Connecticut

space is taken. For the last century most of our dead have been interred here, and an inspection of the tombstones will serve as a roll-call of names known in this parish for generations—names of men and women who rank high in our parish annals. Reverend Benjamin J. Relyea is here; the three Elwoods, Lucy and Frank and Everett, whose Sunday-school work influenced for good the entire youth of the parish during the first quarter of this century; Mrs. Emily Jennings Beers, for upwards of fifty years foremost in our Ladies' Aid Society, an organization that each passing year makes more unique as a living relic of an early day; Miss M. Louisa Hyde, last descendant of the house so renowned and influential.

Now a part of the Greens Farms Cemetery is the little Burr family burial ground on the south side. Miss Helen Ward Banks lies here.

The Country Road

THE Bankside farmers proved their Puritan spirit of independence when on their own account they bought the land of the Indians and later migrated along the cattle trail and settled here. This trail, with all its turns, undulations of country, hills, streams, and valleys, led from the Sasco (Sasqua) ford to the Saugatuck and was, probably, the original Indian trail. The cattle trod it first, then little bands of home-makers bound for Bankside, and eventually it became a cart path; it is now our aristocratic Beachside Avenue, its width of 33 feet still recalling its more primitive state.

Kings Highway, leading from Fairfield, abruptly stops at the Sasco River ford. In all the early records the continuation of this highway has been called "the Country Road." This road was laid out after 1660. The early proprietors in naming their highways as in everything else, recognized no individual, state or potentate. That is why it has been so difficult to trace out property lines of lands bordering public, and nameless, highways.

During the closing years of the "Farmers' Club" the members considered the naming of the streets below the half-mile common. Therefore, commencing at the Sasqua ford the first street leading north is Bulkley

Greens Farms, Connecticut

Avenue, named for the family who seemed to have had Fairfield affiliations rather than Greens Farms. Continuing along this Country Road to the point near the residence of William Stewart Hemson, in 1865-66, a new road was laid out and built through to Southport connecting with West Way Road of that village. A very old house stood on the hill to the north, the homestead of Joseph Wakeman.

A few rods to the west along the Country Road, Clapboard Hill road forks off. On this road the Goodsells, Beerses, and Taylors had early home-lots. From here the Country Road, "Sas Creek Lane" now refined into "Sasco Creek Lane," branches to the south and meets the original cattle trail (Beachside Avenue). The first Joshua Jennings, who became a very large landholder, appears to have had his home-lot at the southwest corner of the intersection of these two roads. This location is suggested from the following transcript of records as compiled by Mr. Lacey:

"Charlotte Jennings was the wife of David Jennings, whose father was also named David, the latter being the son of Joshua Jennings. This Joshua Jennings on January 7th, 1804 gave his son, David, a deed of 17 acres at the south west corner of Sasco Creek Road and Greens Farms Road, describing it as 'The Old Homestead.' This David died in 1831, and in the distribution of his estate, the corner lot went to David, his son (husband of Charlotte), and the 6 acres ad-

The Country Road

joining on the west, described as the 'Old Home Lot' went to Talcott Jennings."

There is no question in my mind but that this is as nearly a correct location as can be obtained, for "Aunt Charlotte's" house stood on this lot until quite recent years.

To the right again, Maple Avenue branches to the north, and Maple Lane to the south. Midway between Maple Lane and Polly Morehouse Lane, which leads to the freight station, on the south side stood the old First Methodist Church, a barn-like structure which was torn down many years ago, its communicants merging with the Southport church. Where Greens Farms Creek flows to the Country Road and meets the fresh-water stream is a calamus swamp lot, now the property of Mr. Thomas Shaunnessy. Next we cross the approach to the Greens Farms station which was relocated here when the railway was four-tracked in 1897, thus making a new right of way to Beachside Avenue along the creeks south of the railway. Right across the road to the right is the old Alvord Homestead. Next is Turkey Hill Road, which forks off from the present Beachside Avenue and the northeast corner of the old green, running in a generally northerly direction until it intersects with the Long Lots Road.

Morningside Drive reaches north to Long Lots Road along the easterly slope of Clapboard Hill. Rounding the corner to the south of Clapboard Hill is the old

Greens Farms, Connecticut

common and intersection of Beachside Avenue, the site of the Machamux Memorial Boulder. At this point the Morehouses, Grumman and Gideon, had their home sites. "Uncle" Samuel Craft, who was a lay reader in the Methodist Church, lived where the present parsonage property now is, and almost directly opposite and the other side of the road was built the house for the first minister of the parish, the Reverend Daniel Chapman, about the year 1715. A little further on at the "hot holes" Thomas Nash had his blacksmith shop at the same early time. The corner lot opposite has been known as the clay hole. These three sites have been verified for me by William E. Smith of Southport, whose great-grandfather was Mr. Samuel Craft.

The Island Lane branches off to the left along the horse pasture to Sherwood Island. Here was the large Banks farm, now the Wynfromere Farm. To the right was the homestead built by my father, and later the property of the late Deacon Frederick T. Bedford, in 1864. The western end of Clapboard Hill here intersects the Country Road, and just to the west was located the home of our Revolutionary minister, the Reverend Hezekiah Ripley, now owned by Mr. Brubaker. Around the hill on the side of the road outside the fence line, near Muddy Brook, was the old David Mills house, a landmark for three-quarters of a century.



MORNINGSIDE DRIVE NEAR ELMSTEAD

About 1900

The Country Road

Gideon Hurlburt's fulling mill stood just north of the bridge on Muddy Brook. The road to the north is West Parish Road. The Colonial Burial Ground is next on the left, and the Second, or Colonial, Meeting-House stood opposite the gate. Further along on the top of the hill the Wakemans established their homesteads. Petticoat Lane leads in a southerly direction to Petticoat Lane Point. Climbing again to the brow of Benjamin Hill, the road forking north is now known as Prospect Avenue. The Country Road continues in a southwesterly direction until it meets and crosses Hills Point Road, on which the Rumseys and the Guyers had located, while southerly the Sherwoods at the Tide Mill, and at Hills Point the Hill family were the earliest settlers on the southern slope of Compo Hill, then known as Compo Neck.

The Country Road continues westerly, where the Disbrows had their home-lots on the northern slope of Compo Hill. At the foot of the hill Valley Road comes in from the north. At this intersection the Compo School was located for many years until it was merged with the school on Bridge Street, now known as the Saugatuck School. And so the old road meanders, winding in and out until it meets Ferry Lane and on to the old ferry at the Saugatuck River. Much of the land at this point in the early days was owned by the Allens and the Grays.

This Country Road from Sasco River to the ferry

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at Saugatuck was the great highway for all the coast towns along the Connecticut shore. Over Prospect Avenue to the ford at Sasco, General George Washington was escorted by Reverend Doctor Hezekiah Ripley, in 1775, when the General rode through Greens Farms on his way to Cambridge, Mass., to take charge of the Continental Army.

In 1745 the May session of the General Assembly at Hartford “grants to Matthew Disbrow of Fairfield the liberty to keep a ferry and build a tall bridge across the salt water river (Saugatuck) between Fairfield and Norwalk, at a place called the Narrows at the great rock, to be for horse and load and also for a single horse, ox or cow or other meat cattle, 8 pence old tenor or 4 pence in like tenor for single person. Ferry to begin at or before 1st. June 1746.”

This ferry continued for many years; the bridge, however, was never built. A hundred years after the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad agreed, with the town of Westport, to maintain a foot bridge alongside of the train bridge.

A-Courting

A FEW years after the uniting of the old West Parish of Fairfield with that section of the colonial town of Norwalk to the west of the Saugatuck River which was set apart by the General Court of Connecticut as the town of Westport in 1835, the old feuds that had existed so long about the "dividend" line between the two colonial towns were to be smoothed out. A prosperous proprietor's son, William Scribner, living on Indian Hill, Saugatuck, one evening donned his Sunday best; a-courting and a-wooing he would go. He tracked down to the old ford of the Saugatuck River. From the corner of his nautical eye, the old ferryman divined the young man's intentions without any questioning, for was not the old ferryman acquainted with all the goings and the comings of the inhabitants?

Reaching the east side of the river, the ferryman eased the young man's nervousness and said he would moor the boat to a large iron ring in the rock (which ring can still be found) so that he could ferry himself back during the night without calling the ferryman. Following down Ferry Lane and along Compo Road, William was intent on courting Mary Hill, the sister of my mother, down in the old Hill House on Hills Point. These visits continued until he won Mary; they

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settled down on a part of the farm on Compo Road below the Minute Man.

Then came the great westward movement in the early fifties. They sold their farm in 1850, packed their household goods and family Bible, and entered upon the great adventure. The route was by steamboat up the Hudson to Albany, by railroad to Buffalo, and by steamer on Lake Erie, up Lake Huron, and down Lake Michigan to Milwaukee, Wisconsin; then by covered wagon some eighty miles, until they finally came to Rosendale, where they helped to form a new community and church, and to build a state. This is only one example of many others who have gone out from the various paternal homes in New England to build up the Great Middle West with Puritan character and ability.

The Railway

ABOUT 1846 a railroad was projected from New York to New Haven. Westport, true to the independence of thought and action of its Bankside fathers, in town meeting instructed its representative in the General Assembly to oppose the granting of the charter. No iron horses for our fathers! But more far-seeing men sat in legislation, and the project was viewed favorably, and a charter was granted. This single-track road was opened for service on December 27, 1848.

Two surveys of the town showed the present route the best, there being less hills to cut through. The upper survey was near the present Post Road. It was a wise choice, for crossing the Saugatuck River near the old ferry there is a surpassing marine view down the harbor, and after passing the cut at Compo Hill, Compo Mill Pond opens out with its Tide Mill and a broad outlook on the Sound. To the south are Gallup Gap Creek and the old horse pasture, and the extensive outlook across the meadows and the Sound to Long Island.

Here three highway bridges over the railroad were necessary in a distance of 500 feet. These were named the "Tri-bridges." The west one was for the cart path running down Long Hill to the salt meadows; the

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middle one for the present Shore Road, and the east bridge connected with Turkey Hill Road. Looking out from the train now one can see the shore line from Burial Hill eastward to the bluff where the Bankside farmers settled, the Indian lands now the site of wigwams too grand to be within the bounds of Indian imagination. This stretch of railroad, some four miles on to the Southport harbor, helps to give the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad its name of the "Shore Line."

At the time when the railroad was being graded in 1848 there was a large influx of Irishmen as laborers on the line. The work was largely hand labor with pick, shovel, and wheelbarrow. During the years 1852-1853 the road was double-tracked.

Right here in Greens Farms was a logical place for a station, but the community continued agricultural with no centre or country store. The farmers continued to go to Southport or Westport to get their mail, to trade, and to replenish their demijohns with gin, for Mrs. Abigail Jennings' tavern was no more.

About 1870 the farmers clubbed together and graded for a Greens Farms station, located south of the tracks between the Turkey Hill Road and the Shore Road bridges on the property of the old green. The railroad built the station; the same building now serves as the westbound station, having been moved to its present site when the road was four-tracked, between the years

The Railway

1889 and 1897. For that event the building actually "rode on the cars," for it was transported on flat cars from the old site to the new. At the time of four-tracking, by agreement between the town of Westport and the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, all grade crossings were eliminated, and overhead bridges or underpasses were provided. Between the Saugatuck River and Sasco Creek, the original boundary of Greens Farms, seven overhead bridges and two underpasses had to be constructed.

The New Haven Railroad instituted in 1876 through train service from Washington, Philadelphia, and on to Boston, ferrying the whole train of cars around New York City on the steamer *Maryland*.

At first Greens Farms was a flag station with Ebenezer Baker in charge. On April 7, 1875, George E. Crossman was appointed agent; some six trains stopping each way daily. Mr. Crossman became the first postmaster, and his letter-boxes were made by a local carpenter—"pigeon-holes," two dozen of them—and placed in the ticket office. After the death of Mr. Crossman, in 1882, his son, Mortimer M., succeeded, and continued until pensioned, November 28, 1930. Now his son-in-law, M. Rudolph Robling, carries on the family tradition. The post office is now third class.

The blizzard of 1888 filled the cuts through Greens Farms to the tops of the banks, and was the last of the

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snow blockades to be dug out. Mr. F. C. Coley, General Passenger Traffic Manager of the New Haven System, and an old friend, lends me the photograph for the picture appearing on the opposite page. The railroad was tied up from Monday forenoon until 6 P.M. on Friday.

A fourth improvement to the railroad was the electrification work begun in this section on June 21, 1914.



1888



GALLUP GAP CUT, 1888

*By the courtesy of Mr. F. C. Coley, General Passenger Traffic Manager of
the New Haven Ry.*

Farming

FOR the first twenty years the Bankside farmers were busy making homes and settling down—"getting things started well" and firmly laying the foundations for a strong community. Their houses built and their home-lots fenced, they turned to the ground for food, first raising corn, rye, and peas. The General Court of Connecticut desired the colonists to grow hemp and flax; seed of the latter was distributed free, and each farmer was to sow a spoonful or more and to give the excess to his neighbors. But it was some years before the Bankside farmers did much serious experimenting with it; their skepticism of anything new became proverbial. As a matter of fact, they were probably too concerned with the reliable methods of making a living to gamble on uncertainties.

Their stock was marked and grazed together, the sheep were pastured in enclosures, and the horses were turned loose on the common horse-pasture on Sherwood Island and land adjoining. Oxen did the team work and the horses were used for riding and travel, as there were no wheeled vehicles. The salt marshes afforded an abundance of salt grass, which stock will eat, and between the salt meadows and the uplands there is always a strip of black grass, and this, if properly cured, the cattle will eat in winter and thrive on.

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Farming gradually progressed; English grasses were sown on fields newly prepared for cultivation, and mills starting over on Mill River furnished an incentive for the growing of rye and oats, despite the fact that the laws were very strict about tolling the farmers' grist.

The hills to the north were wooded, and in winter work on the timber proved lucrative. Pipe staves, four and a half feet long by three inches wide and a half-inch thick, were split for export. Boat building was also an early industry. At first timbers were hewed with a broadaxe or shaped by adz, but later the saw pit with a whip-saw came into use; one man on top of the log and the other below in the pit worked the saw up and down. Afterwards the sawmill was established for sawing logs, using the principle of the up-and-down saw.

The Bankside farmers had plenty of game and sea food; they did not have to depend solely upon the ground. This was fortunate, for they had large families. But the children were an asset—they were early taught to be useful, to help with the chores, and to learn the household arts such as spinning, weaving, curing meats, and cooking. At the same time, their education was decidedly not neglected; lacking schools, they were home-taught and lost nothing thereby for the Bankside parents came of good, solid, intelligent stock from the shires of England, with a substantial

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background, and were capable enough of instructing their young.

There was little money or coin for business transactions. Produce was bartered or used in paying taxes. Prices were established by town vote. Prices of team work and wages for mechanics were set in the same way. Particular persons were appointed as tavern-keepers, and strict laws against drinking to excess were established by the General Court.

Very early, fruit trees brought over from England were set out. Later, the apples were developed into new improved varieties, and Greens Farms gradually, with characteristic caution, began to realize the possibilities of apple growing as a source of income. The Baldwin and Rhode Island Greening were, and still are, the most popular varieties. It is of interest to note that the first apple tree set out in the state of Ohio came from an orchard in this parish. An ancestor of the late Miss Laura Chapman (Miss Chapman was a direct lineal descendant of the first minister of this parish), carried a seedling from his farm in Cross Highway on horseback to his new home, a claim, in Ohio. It was carefully nurtured and lived to be very old.

The cultivation of land must have been crude in these early days. Farm tools were primitive. A cast-iron plow and an "A"-shaped harrow, with teeth of wood two inches in diameter, were the principal tools.

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For smoothing purposes, white birch trees were attached to a cross-beam and drawn over the land. I remember these wooden-tooth harrows in my earlier days. For planting corn, it was the custom to ridge up the land by turning two furrows against each other and cross-marking them, then planting the corn in the intersection. My Uncle Walter Jennings and others cultivated their corn with oxen and plow; hence we have the term "plowing corn." Hoeing the corn after this manner of planting was hard and laborious work, but often good crops of corn were raised by this primitive means of cultivation.

Onion growing appears to have started around 1840-50 and was successfully carried on until the closing years of the last century. The growing of onions at once began to improve the land, for level patches were selected, deeply plowed, harrowed, stones picked off, manured with many loads of stable manure, ashes, bone-dust, and guano. The land was raked by hand and the onions planted in rows a foot apart. Onion raising required much hand work, and boys and young men found employment by getting down on their knees and weeding the onions, thus crawling back and forth over the fields. Then there was the hoeing between the rows. This was done by a hand hoe. At first there were no labor-saving machines, but soon a two-row sower was invented by William Hill of Compo, and also by a Mr. Crofut of Lyons Plains, Weston,

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which was adjusted to sow about four pounds of seed per acre. Then the push wheel onion-hoe with a wooden frame and wheel in front was invented by Andrew W. Jennings in 1864. This was clumsy at first, but like the old wooden-tooth harrow, it did satisfactory work. Mr. John Guyer, who lived on Hills Point Road, invented and manufactured several kinds of wheeled onion-hoes made of iron with steel blades and springs. Henry B. Sherwood of Compo invented a wheeled hoe, and Arthur B. Sherwood of Mill Hill did the same. For years this section controlled the onion market of New York City. Onions were shipped by packet vessels from Southport and Westport. During the Civil War onion growing reached its climax in production and prices. Family fortunes hereabout can be traced to this era, and the most proper and legitimate central object in the creation of coats of arms for a dozen of our old families would not be a lion rampant, or a unicorn rampant, but a Greens Farms onion rampant. Many young men gained their start in life growing onions, notably the late Edward T. Bedford.

The late Charles A. Meeker of Greens Farms invented the Meeker smoothing harrow about 1880, which prepared onion ground so well that very little hand raking was necessary. This harrow has been adapted to various other uses such as grading lawns and preparing land for truck crops. It is still manufactured in Southport.

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The improvement of the shape of the onion early attracted the attention of progressive farmers. The original Wethersfield onion, such as was first planted here, was flat or saucer-shaped. By careful selection and breeding, gradually the globe-shaped onion became standard, and the varieties now known as Southport Red, Yellow and White Globe onion, so named from the shipping port, really originated in our own parish of Greens Farms.

The growing of seed was scientifically attended to. Seed over a year old has poor germinating qualities. Then, too, the plantings of the different varieties of onions for seed must be kept apart in the field to prevent cross-pollinization. The white onion seems to be a sport, and the seed growers always wanted just a slight tinge of red on the cheek of the onion.

This fashion in color scheme in the white onion had an interesting background. The bumblebees in gathering the nectar from the pollen on the red onion seed, dropped specks of it on the adjoining field of white onion seed, and this resulted in a little splash of blush-red on the cheek of the white onion. Thereby hangs a bit of romance.

At the apple-paring bee the young hostess provided pans of apples for her women guests to pare, and the one who could remove the skin without breaking the long paring was allowed to go into the centre of the room and swing it around her head and then let it

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drop to the floor. Then they all studied the initial which this paring resembled. It was supposed to form the first letter in the name of one of the young men present. He could refuse then and there to redeem the forfeit, or he could make a philopena present.

In the days following, when preparing onions for market, if he occasionally discovered a few white onions with just a little blush of red, he would sort these out until he had a little bunch. At the next paring bee he would carry this bunch of onions and at the proper time blushinglly present his lady with them. She, perceiving the blush on the onion, blushed herself—so much that the young man would take her arm and start the grand march, and the company would dance the Virginia Reel.

Selected white onions, carefully grown and cured, often commanded ten dollars per barrel in the New York market, while the average yearly price for the red or yellow varieties was a dollar and a half per barrel and up. A smart onion weeder could care for two and a half to three acres of onions a season. The curing of the onion and the wintering was carefully looked after; ventilation and an even temperature were of prime importance.

During the Civil War many barrels were shipped to the South as food for the soldiers. Onions have the unusual quality of preventing scurvy. Around the eighties many schooner loads of New York horse ma-

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nure were landed on our shores and spread on the onion ground. It was usual for the town assessors to ask how many acres of onion ground you had on your farm; and then they made an advanced assessment for onion ground over the other farm land.

After 1860 the growing of pears, peaches, and the small fruits became quite general and profitable. Then followed truck farming, and in these latter days, on old onion ground, glass-houses have been built for growing fruit and flowers with artificial heat.

From the best of the author's memory, he can recall some 75 farmers or individuals who were onion growers within the section of Cross Highway, Sasco River, and Saugatuck River. The acreage would average from one to ten acres each. Good crops would run up to 100 barrels per acre. Many young men were anxious to raise onions on shares and so got a start in life.

In the beginning of onion growing the farmers thought that the land would stand cropping indefinitely, but such was not the fact. No land can stand the fertilization of manure, ashes, bone dust, guano, and commercial fertilizers without rotation of crops, so onion growing came to a close with the century. These onion-growing farmers kept a yoke of oxen, cows, fatted hogs, and a family horse. Salt meadows were mowed for bedding as well as sea weeds picked up on the beach. Carrots were often raised between the

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rows of onions, and the farmer boys planted watermelon seeds in the onion patch and so in the fall had delicious "Mountain Sweets" to eat. Potatoes yielded well, so did corn and rye. The meadows produced heavy crops of timothy hay. All these products, including surplus apples and cider, were shipped on the market boat to New York, where they found a quick sale at good prices. Thus the prediction of the first five farmers who viewed Machamux, the red man's Paradise, from Clapboard Hill, was realized as THE BOUNTIFUL LAND.

One of the "Seven Plagues" of Onion Growing

GEORGE HALE, a young man of Greens Farms, served through the Civil War and was mustered out with the rank of captain. He married, and bought the Ebenezer Disbrow farm on the northern slope of Compo Hill. He was an industrious and progressive farmer and onion grower. One morning he went out into his onion patch to hoe onions, which were about six inches high, and he noticed a little spot where the onions were drooping over. He saw that they had been eaten, but could find no cause. The next morning he observed that the spot had been enlarged and that more onions were drooping. On the third morning there were several square rods that had been eaten. He dug down and discovered a worm that was eating off the onion just above the ground. What to do he did not know.

But the following morning he went out into his patch with his men, each with a pail, determined to pick up the worms. They gathered a considerable number; he kept up this operation every morning for several weeks until he had literally picked up and destroyed a bushel of these worms. George Fairchild, Jr., who was an onion grower on Benjamin Hill, as well as Lewis P. Wakeman with his father, the Taylors

One of the "Seven Plagues"

and others were having like experiences with the cutworm.

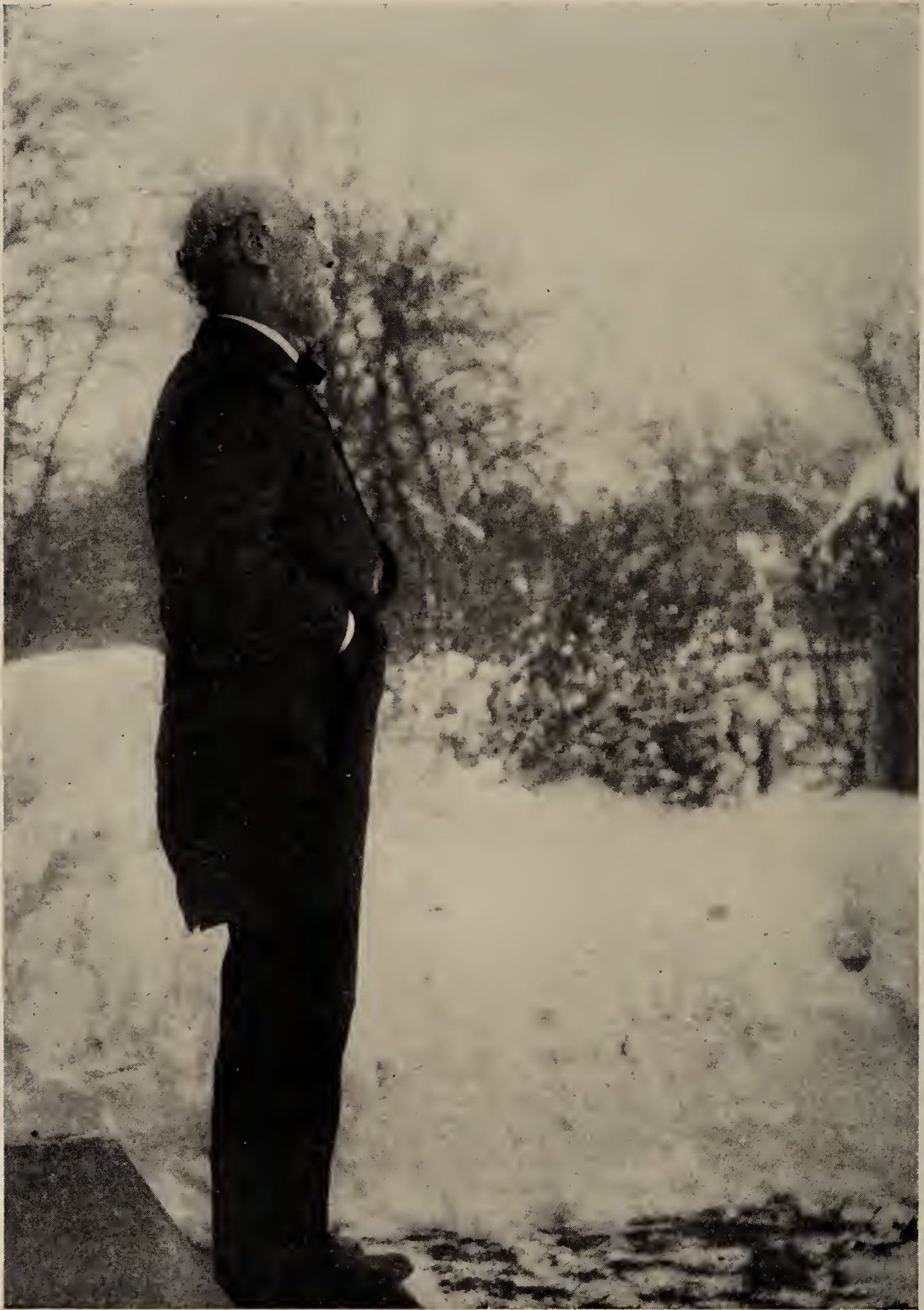
The late Charles Burr Meeker of North Avenue was a great benefactor to the onion grower. Forty years ago the cutworm plague threatened to destroy not only the entire onion crop but also the home garden truck. The cutworm is a fat little ugly brown creature, usually an inch long, with a single ambition—to cut down the tender young vegetable stalk. It was a genuine menace that extended over the whole eastern seaboard country. Nobody seemed to be able to cope with it. Mr. Meeker, by patient experimenting, eventually hit upon the idea of mixing bran, molasses, and paris green, and scattering it over the land. The idea worked, the only one that did work, and an enterprising farmer on the Hudson made his fortune, boxing up the mixture and selling it. Mr. Meeker, too busy perfecting his melons, neglected to take advantage of his money-making idea. He was satisfied to be acknowledged in later years the foremost grower of melons in the state.

The Farmers' Club

IN the winter of "sixty-sixty-one" the farmers, realizing the benefits of an organization to discuss agricultural problems, called a general meeting of the farmers, which was held at the schoolhouse; thus the Greens Farms Farmers' Club came into being. John S. Sherwood, of Mill Hill, Southport, was elected the first president, with Jarvis Jennings, secretary. The constitution was drawn up and adopted. The club held its meetings with the various members at their homes.

For over fifty years this organization was known throughout the state for its intelligent and progressive discussions. All politics were ignored. Among the later presidents were William J. Jennings, John Henry Jennings, William H. Burr, the author, and Joseph Adams. Judge Silas Burr Sherwood was for a long time the secretary, followed by Edward C. Birge, J. Frank Elwood, Joseph Adams, and when the club discontinued, Herbert S. Baldwin was the secretary.

There was a fine friendly community spirit during these years of the Farmers' Club. These farmers took a prominent part in supporting the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. They encouraged exhibits of fruits, vegetables, and produce at the Norwalk Fair. For a number of years the club sent a train of



DEACON FREDERICK T. BEDFORD
1823-1904

The Farmers' Club

oxen, sometimes as many as forty yoke, to the fair and brought home the first prize of \$25.00; this money was appropriated for an oyster supper or an institute where outside speakers and professors from the Agricultural Station were asked to be present. Doctor E. H. Jenkins, for a long time the director of the Station, was a yearly visitor either at the club meetings or at the institute, which was generally held on Washington's Birthday. T. S. Gold of West Cornwall, for many years secretary of agriculture for the state, enjoyed coming and meeting with the farmers.

However, in reading over some of the recommendations of the club relating to varieties of fruits and vegetables, one finds that such information would be obsolete in today's pomological meetings.

The following is a copy of the inventory of tools and teams which my father sold to Mr. Frederick T. Bedford when he sold him his farm in the spring of 1864:

one pair of oxen	\$150.00
one horse	100.00
2 cows	50.00
2 heifers	25.00
4 pigs	14.00
one ox cart	20.00
2 farm waggons	50.00
1 ox sled and stone boat	10.00
2 sleighs	35.00
2 harnesses and weffletree	30.00
2 ploughs	10.00
3 harrows	20.00
2 chains	4.00
2 ox yokes	5.00
1 Wheelbarrow	2.00

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1 grind stone	\$2.00
Scythes and grain cradle	7.00
Onion sower	3.00
3 onion hoes	5.00
Crowbar, shovels, hoes and forks	3.50
Hay cutter	7.00
Horse rake	6.00
Ashes	40.00
Manure	48.00
	<hr/>
	\$646.50

Oystering

ONE of the earliest votes in town meeting after Westport was organized in 1835, was the limiting of the bushels of oysters which any one person could take from the public grounds in the Sound and harbor. This rule seemed to have no teeth in it as there was no penalty attached. However, all down the century, the town has been very jealous of its public clam and oyster grounds along the Sound.

About 1840, the town allotted to certain people under-water land in Compo Mill Pond for oyster planting. Perhaps this was the beginning of oyster cultivation that has reached such a large extent in Long Island Sound. Mill Pond oysters soon won the blue ribbon, and, at one time, they brought \$20.00 a barrel in the Fulton Market in New York. These oysters still maintain their superior quality.

Eels have always been plentiful in the creeks, but fifty years ago this kind of seafood was much more popular than now. Captain Justus Mills has told me that there used to be as many as a dozen boats with flashlights working for eels over the pond at night. Crabs run in August and September, and those caught in local creeks seem to be particularly palatable. Clamming used to be very popular—and our beaches have supplied surprisingly large quantities of round

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and long clams. An especially high tide lashed by strong winds would often wash in from the Sound oysters and round clams and they would be picked up on the shore in shallow water as the tide went out. Sometimes beds of round clams were located, usually in eel grass, near the shore, and at low tide it was high sport to don rubber hip-boots, and, armed with a clam rake and with a basket tied around the waist, gather a "mess" of round clams.

Long clamming is safe but calls for more perseverance. Long clams live down in the flats; perigee tide with high winds, particularly in winter, will uncover a big area of clam flats, and the biggest clams are always nearer the water-line. The bigger the clam, the deeper he lives, the more strongly entrenched, and the more cleverly he eludes capture. He sends his head up to the surface of the mud for air, and the instant he hears a step (his hearing is acute), his head retreats—but leaves a hole. That is how he is located. One looks for clam holes. Often they eject salt water—"squirting" is the local word for it—and they are located that way, too. Vindictively they will sometimes squirt into one's eyes when the hoe is almost down to them.

The old farmers used to go after the biggest ones in front of Phippses at perigee tides, sometimes down eighteen to twenty inches and more. These are called "goslins" and were considered a great delicacy when

Oystering

stuffed and baked. But all this now belongs to history, and in spots along the beach thick sand is being washed up over the clam flats; possibly in a generation or two nature will have taken away the last remaining suggestion of the habitat of the clam in our midst.

Men of Brawn

THE old stock of men born and raised in Greens Farms was hardy and strong, and generally the men were physically big. Most of them were farmers, many of them well-to-do, and their lineage, community position, and personal dignity warranted their being called "square" by their neighbors. But they were a hard-working race, active in the fields from dawn to sunset, and setting the pace for the farm "help."

My father was such a worker. I have heard Mr. Thomas Shaughnessy relate that as a young man fresh from Ireland he hired out to Father, and they set off together to hoe corn. Hoeing corn in that day was a man's job. It required hard labor and some skill in handling the hoe, for the corn was planted on ridges formed by turning two furrows of sod together, and although gone over with the plow before the hoeing, there was always a grassy ridge in the centre of the furrow to be covered with earth and cut thoroughly with the hoe. Twitch grass, the most diabolical of all weeds to try the farmer's patience, usually took hold in a corn field. And hoeing corn always must be done under the hot sultry sky of July and August—the dog-days.

Father started his row, and then turned to show his

Men of Brawn

new man how to break the clods down without injuring the young grain shoots. Then Father started in to lead. The young fellow watched the older man for a minute. Then he shook his head and spit on his hands. "Be Jabbers," he said to himself, "the Yankee ain't goin' to down this Irishman." By noon both men were well tired out, but had gained mutual respect for each other's strength, and through life continued friendly and neighborly relations.

Road making developed muscles. It was hard work, and performed in a primitive fashion. Ditches were plowed on the side of the road and the loose earth scraped into the middle and rounded up, with frequent water bars to shed the rains into the ditches. It is hardly possible now to imagine the amount of dust generated on these roads during the dry season, the amount of mud after a heavy rain, or the frozen ruts of winter. It was a relief to have these ruts blanketed by snow. Later, when gravel was introduced to spread on the roads, the notion was condemned generally as an extravagance—this in 1870. Bankside was still conservative.

I recall several men who "made" most of our roads fifty years ago. Harry Hull up on Sturges Highway was a veteran road-repair man. He had a team of oxen so trained that they would "gee" and "haw" and "back" as he held the scraper, thus saving the driver. Charles Mills on North Avenue was another road

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man; he made the old Dingee race track. Oscar Lewis is the last one of our native sons to carry on the road-making traditions.

The Mills family produced husky men, many of them stone masons. Most of the stone walls still remaining in these parts and many of the cellars were laid by them. It was a common practice for a gang of stone masons to walk as far as Greenfield Hill for a day's work, and back again at night, after handling stone all day. One who has handled heavy stone all day can understand what that means. Samuel Mills with a couple of his sons and his brother David, formed an outstanding wall-building gang; they were just as efficient in cradling grain, threshing with the flail, and butchering hogs in the fall. They had little schooling, but much innate honesty and good common sense that was able to give practical criticism to those who had superior advantages.

Fifty years ago, Father had a stone wall built along Turkey Hill Road. The Millses built it at a certain price per rod. While talking, Sam paced off the distance and named the price. The deal was made and neither side thought of any written agreement. Their word had been passed. They would cradle a field of rye for Uncle Henry Wakeman by the acre and estimate the acreage by looking at the lot.

Home Economies

THE “foremothers” of the West Parish of Fairfield looked well to their households. It was their pride to work and save. Thriftiness and economy were racial inheritances; conditions made them frugal. Somewhere hidden away was a stocking to hold the coin—the beginning of our mutual savings bank. Nothing was wasted; it was a case of waste not, want not. It’s a Yankee, an Anglo-Saxon bit of wisdom, that still holds good. Everything was saved and put to use.

Small pieces of calico and dress goods were pieced together for bed quilts, and the now-famous old New England quilting bee was introduced. The farmers’ wives gathered from far and near to piece a quilt, to drink tea, to gossip; it was a social interlude in their round of household duties, and doubtless a most welcome one. Occasions for social intercourse were few in those busy days. How the fingers flew, how the tongues wagged, the alert eyes of the older women upon the stitches of the younger ones! Quilting bees became increasingly popular; often the women pieced a quilt in the afternoon, and the men came in at dark, all eating supper together; many happy romances were traced to these bees. Eventually it became quite an

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industry as the quilts were made more and more elaborate; from a simple bed-covering for warmth, they became ornamental, and housewives would leave open the bedroom door so visitors could see the quilts on the bed. Many were gorgeous and many were extremely artistic, as new designs were used and more daring colors pieced together. Possibly there were a score or more designs, but those more common and beautiful were the Rose, the Fan, the Tree of Paradise, the Double Irish Chain, the Bear's Paw, the Log Cabin, the Rail Fence, and the Necktie. We still piece quilts here; only last fall our Ladies' Aid Society pieced one.

Much ingenuity was exerted in putting everything to a use. Strips of old woolen cloth were home dyed and braided into rugs; corn husks were made into outdoor mats. Clothing for the children was remade from the older folks' garments, and the boys prized, ever so much, the row of brass buttons on the coat. Spinning and weaving blankets as well as home-made cloth for clothing, preparing flax for linens, and the knitting of mittens and stockings for the men folks were everyday occupations. Tallow was saved for making candles and tallow dips. The skimmings from the boiled meat were used again in frying, or were given to poorer folks, and all left-over fats were cooked and tried out and made into soft soap, a barreful each year. Goose feathers were saved for feather beds, and the turkey wings for brushes; other feathers, old rags,

Home Economies

and metals were traded off to the tin-peddler, a popular visitor, for tinware and Yankee notions.

Home work on shirts from the factory in the city was a source of making money later on. The shirt factory sent around a team carrying bundles of shirt material to be worked upon; some of the women sewed in the gussets; others, the seams and bands; stitching and pleating the bosoms, and making collars, was an art. My mother once told me that in two winters she earned enough on shirts to put blinds on the new house. The girls were taught these homely but useful duties, while the boys were given night and morning chores, such as keeping the wood-boxes filled—a job in itself in winter—and caring for the stock, with time off for skating and sliding down hill. It was a proud boy who could make his own bow and arrow or a pung sled.

The men became wood workers, helping the boss carpenter by scoring the logs for hewing. Many farmers could repair their ox-carts, build ox-sleds, stone-boats, and harrows. Young men who loved the water and were handy with tools could build a rowboat, or a skipjack, and make the sails. In his early married life, my father in the winter got up at 4 A.M., fed his oxen, got breakfast, then started for Good Hill, in Weston, with his ox-team and sled to haul down wood for every third load, and was glad of the job. What do young men of today think of that?

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Threshing with the flail on the barn floor required many hours in the winter. Summer was as full of toil. By the sweat of their brows our fathers eked out a living, and nature was a long time smiling on their efforts. It was a man's task. Our fathers saved during their lifetime, and it was their pride to pay off their mortgages by middle life and become freemen and esquires among their fellow townsmen. Of such blood we have sprung.

Generous bunches of herbs both for medicinal and for culinary purposes were gathered and hung up in the attic. Among the former were mountain mint, boneset, pennyroyal, catnip, and fennel, while for culinary purposes we find thyme, summer savory, anise, and sage being used. Slippery elm was dried or made into tea which was supposed to relieve coughing. Caraway and mustard seeds and dill were used for various seasonings, while birch bark and sassafras were used for flavoring small beer. Calamus and flag root were boiled down and made into confections. Sweet cicely and calamus were eaten as green herbs. The home dyeing of the virgin wool as well as the re-dyeing of old cloth was an art presided over by the good housewife. Black walnut, butternut, and sumac were used for this purpose, while logwood and indigo were bought at the stores for the other shades.

With the coming of the nineteenth century, members of the old families were going out into the world

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as business men. William Couch, who was in business in New York, signed his deed, "William Couch, Merchant." The members of the Andrews family were in New York and had gone to other western states.

It was quite customary for members of these and other families to come back to Greens Farms and secure "board" during the summer season from the farmers. This proved a source of profit to the farmer's wife as well as a renewal of early family friendships. Later on, Hezekiah Taylor enlarged his house and made a business of taking boarders. Since then this property has been called "Castle Taylor."

Down on the Shore Road the George Palen property was enlarged and was conducted as a summer hotel and became known as "Beachside Inn."

The Salt-Box House

As her colonists in the New World were becoming increasingly prosperous—building two-story houses was a sure sign—Queen Anne, early in the eighteenth century, although too domestically inclined to bother much with her colonial empire, viewed with no favor the claims to pretension of those colonists. If they were rich enough to build themselves two-story houses, they were able to pay more taxes; it was in the Stuart blood to tax. So the decree went out from London that there should be a special tax on all two-story houses in these colonies.

That decree was the cause of the salt-box house being evolved. The Connecticut Yankee, not yet daring to talk back to London, was in no mood to accept the injustice; he hedged the issue. He would stop building two-story houses. He left off whittling nutmegs from basswood and began to whistle and think—and whittle. He picked up a small block of pine and turning it over in his hand he noticed the knot extending through the block to the heart. He stopped whistling, he stopped whittling—and thought. Then his whistling took on a new lilt as he whittled with fresh energy. He had an idea. He would make a house like the block, with the chimney in place of the knot—in one story—and the roof sloping, like a salt-

The Salt-Box House

box. A little attic above in front, high enough for the children's use, but not high enough to be called a second story. Yankee ingenuity!

So around a gigantic stone chimney was built the house, one big room on each side, while a ladder from below reached up to the half-attic. These attics were usually unplastered and not only the sun came through the cracks of the boards, but the snow and rain. On winter mornings the children found snow on their beds.

The compactness of these houses so pleased the housewife that she suggested extending the rear roof a little way and making a room for general storage purposes. Extending the roof a little more made space for a wood-shed and tool-shop. A secret cupboard was usually built into this type of house—sometimes large, sometimes small, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another. Why it was called secret was, perhaps, that the contents of the cupboard were kept—or tried to be kept—secret. My grandfather's secret closet contained his half-gallon demijohn of gin. Other closets in houses here contained Jamaica rum in those queer slim round earthenware bottles now so highly prized by collectors. In such secret closets the spirits—and not the traditional family skeleton—abode.

Next in importance to the secret closet was the salt-box, usually built in a corner of the store-room. Great quantities of salt were imported from Turk's Island in the West Indies, and this parish used its share of the

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commodity to salt down pork and beef, and to cure hides, pelts, and furs. Bushels of it were laid up from time to time by every family. So the "Salt-Box" gives the distinguishing name to this style of house.

Many of the salt-box houses have been taken down or rebuilt. Every cycle of time has a new style of architecture, and many of the houses built during the last quarter of a century will be obsolete and æsthetically monstrous, while these old salt-box houses continue to add a charm to the roadside.

The picture opposite is of the old Hyde house, built in 1755 and razed in 1866. It stood on the ancestral Hyde estate near Long Lots Road, and was a typical salt-box house of the prosperous farmer of those days. This picture is reproduced from an old oil painting by my cousin, the late Mrs. Mary (Coley Hill) Gage; it is now in the possession of Edward C. Birge, Esq.

Six houses of this salt-box type exist in Greens Farms today, and they all must date before the Revolutionary period. Until recently, when the new owners rebuilt the house, there was an old house on Clapboard Hill Road to the west of the Beerses, the shingles long since weatherbeaten. I have been told that this house was the original home site of the Taylor family in Greens Farms.

Just above the fulling mill on Muddy Brook still stands the old Hezekiah Phillips house, the present home of Oscar Lewis. This was "Aunt" Polly Phil-



THE JOSEPH HIDE HOUSE

From a painting by Mary Coley Gage, which painting is now the property of Edward C. Birge

The Salt-Box House

lips's homestead. A little way up on Muddy Brook on Center Street stands the homestead of Samuel Mills, still in the family name, and present home of Mrs. Mary Mills Avery. Up on Long Lots Road at the head of Bulkley Avenue adjoining the former farm of Daniel B. Bradley, stands another of these ancient houses, well preserved and occupied today. On the original Eleven O'Clock Highway, now known as North Avenue, stands the homestead of Henry E. Mills, whose grandfather had a blacksmith shop a little further up the road opposite the home of Mr. Rollin G. Stoddard. The grandfather occupied this salt-box house. The home of Mrs. Samuel Elwood on Long Lots Road on top of the hill to the west of Morningside Drive is the sixth salt-box house. This was formerly owned by the Nash family of early times.

Seventy Years Ago

I WAS a very small boy when I went with my mother to the "last day of school" of my sister, who was older than I. They did not have graduation exercises then; they may have had exercises—"speaking pieces," singing, and addresses, perhaps—but no graduating, for there were no grades.

The old weatherbeaten schoolhouse was then located on the common on the site of the school that had been burned in General Tryon's raid. This was the second school and was later removed when a then modern schoolhouse was built in 1860 on the southern slope of Clapboard Hill. I attended this new school.

We watched with wonder the trains going down to New York, carrying troops at the beginning of the Civil War. We small boys were fired with the military spirit and paraded up and down with toy guns in soldier fashion. We were very proud when our mothers furnished us with soldier caps and capes. Soon after, the percale, of which our blouses were made, had miniature colored flags stamped on it.

The Civil War was progressing and there came from Washington requests for lint and bandages for the soldiers. One afternoon I went with Mother, drawing my small go-cart loaded with sheets, to the house where

Seventy Years Ago

the women met to scrape lint from the sheets and afterward tear them into bandages.

At another time the whole community met one evening down at Mr. Palen's at Beachside and sliced up several hogsheads of onions which were pickled and forwarded to the soldiers to keep off the scurvy.

As cool weather came on, there were requests for mittens for the soldiers. These mittens were half mitten and half glove, for the forefinger was segregated like the thumb to facilitate pulling the trigger.

A company of the 17th Volunteer Regiment was largely recruited in Westport. Henry P. Burr and James E. Hubbell were successive captains of this company. The 28th Regiment was also well represented by Westport men. J. Chapman Taylor was second lieutenant of this regiment. Our only survivor of the old Grand Army is Thomas Glynn of the 28th.

The continuing war kept the prices of farm produce up to a high level. The farmers prospered and one after another bought "Rockaway" carriages made up in Stepney. Civilization hitched up a notch. The stream lines of these Rockaways rivalled the stream lines of the modern automobile.

I went with Father to Westport Village to the Presidential election in 1864. The war had strained family relationship in many cases; party feeling and loyalties ran high. Westport was strongly Democratic and some who sympathized with the South were called

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Copperheads. They retaliated by calling Northern sympathizers *Black Republicans*.

In the spring of 1865 we had moved to a large farm in Wisconsin, and one Saturday about ten o'clock from the telegraph office ten miles away came word that seemed to put a hush over the landscape as the village bells tolled off the years of the martyred President, Abraham Lincoln.

As a boy in Greens Farms, I remember going with my parents to a wedding reception at Uncle Gideon Jennings's given in honor of their son Austin and his bride. The Gideon Jennings homestead was on the south side of the road where Greens Farms Road and Beachside Avenue divide midway between the parsonage and the railway bridge. The grand march was stepped off by couples around the chimney. Some social director in the company told me, young as I was, to get a partner and march—and I did. Any house in which one could not march around the chimney was out of repute in those days, and was incomplete for social functions.

There was cooking rivalry among the women. House and barn raisings were outstanding events that furnished community half-holidays. When buildings were raised, "raising cake," tea, coffee, and cider were passed around. I went to a barn raising while still very small, and mother charged me to "bring home some of Aunt Pulina Whitehead's raising cake."

Seventy Years Ago

One annual social function was the minister's donation party. Everybody went, carrying pies, cake, chickens, spare-ribs, sausages, and food galore for the minister's family. The latter was fortunate in having anything left after supper, for everybody stayed, and while the women washed up afterwards and the men talked crops, the older children rolled the trencher, played "Boston" and so forth, and we very small fry looked on with big eyes, and perhaps had our first lessons in match-making.

Christmas was a long-anticipated day. My sister and I hung up Father's long woolen stockings by the chimney for Santa Claus to fill. We had implicit faith that he came over the land with his reindeer and sleigh-bells bringing good cheer. He never failed us. There was lots of excitement on Christmas morning in emptying the stockings. There were articles of wearing apparel, toys and candy, sometimes a potato for a joke, but always an orange down in the toe. One outstanding delight was the time that I found a small pair of rubber boots. How did Santa know that I wanted a pair of rubber boots? Wasn't it glorious to walk right through puddles of water and snow-broth like a grown man?

Christmas as a feast day, however, was not observed in our home with the joyousness of today. Puritan New England had swung the pendulum to the other extreme from the license of a riotous fête day of the

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Restoration in England, and everything that savored too strongly of Popery was shunned. Just as they kept all color from church service, all decoration and ornament from their meeting-houses, inside and out, so they modified their lives to the same stern, austere pattern. The meeting-houses were bleak and cold in winter, and the services were very long; there was no organ, and the singing of the congregation followed a leader who pitched the tune. The New England religious systems stressed the sermon and instruction with independent thought rather than worship with a ritual. The Catechism was the basis of the teaching in the Sunday School, with Bible pictures and text cards for the small tots.

My first business venture was when Father allotted to me a couple of rows of onions in the patch south of the house. I was to weed them and have the money from their sale in the fall. This was quite an undertaking for a small boy, but I guess that Father helped some. In the fall the onions were sent off on the market boat, and the money deposited in the Southport Savings Bank in my own name.

In 1831 Cyrus McCormick had invented a reaping machine. Thirty years after the invention, I went with Father to Uncle Charles Wakeman's farm on Benjamin Hill where he was trying out these reaper attachments on his one-horse mowing machine. A number of neighbors were in the field watching; it did

Seventy Years Ago

successful work but did not supersede the old hand cradle for many years in this locality of small fields.

Mother took me to the Consecration of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Westport, June 30, 1862. The interior of the edifice excited my curiosity, for it was quite different from our plain church in the Farms. The ceiling was Gothic with blue frescoing and gilt stars, and the windows were also Gothic with colored glass. All this, together with the memory of the chancel, has remained in my mind as a pleasant impression through the years.

Wood was becoming scarce in the lower Farms. Every bit of tree trimming was saved and chopped up for kindling. Near the beginning of the Civil War, to close an estate on Greenfield Hill, some forty acres of woodland in "Dirty Swamp" were plotted into two-acre tracts and auctioned off. Father came home from the auction a very pleased man, for he owned a new woodlot. The taxes all these years have just about balanced the wood and timber which it has yielded.

In the fall of 1862 Father took us all, that is, Mother, Sister Cornelia, and myself, on a trip to Rosendale, Wisconsin, to visit Grandfather Hill and other relatives who had moved from Compo to the West a few years before. There were no "red caps," no sleeping-cars, no cement roads. Travelling by night we slept in our day-coach seats as best we could. We carried

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along lunches, but interspersed this monotony with swooping attacks on railroad lunch counters.

At the junctions of the numerous separate railroad systems there were poor connections, and interminable waits; often we travelled across a city in a carriage from one station to that of another road. Swinging north from Chicago, we reached Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, the end of the rail journey. In the forenoon we left for Rosendale in the mail stagecoach over the old plank road.

America's first hard-surfaced roads were made of wood. It was the most abundant material. The present generation knows little about plank and corduroy roads. They have a limited acquaintance with corduroy in sport clothes and have driven over plank bridges, but that is about all. A plank road inferred liaison with a sawmill, but outside of sawmill range the corduroy was substituted. The logs, cut to the proper length, were laid crosswise on the roadbed to keep the stages and loaded wagons from miring in the mud. Today a well-laid tar pavement will "crawl" under the pressure of loads; imagine how the sticks and logs of a corduroy pavement would "crawl" under the impact of loaded teams in all weathers! Imagine, too, a 12-mile trip over such a road!

Imagine also the uneven surface of a plank road laid flat in the dirt, bedevilled by sun and rain and snow and frost. But we landed in Rosendale at

Seventy Years Ago

Grandfather Hill's at last. He was a long way from his old home at Hills Point, but there was something seductive in the opening West and he was satisfied with his chance. His was the true pioneer spirit.

Father took advantage of the trip to take wide side trips into the northwestern country. On our return journey we came through Ontario, Canada, on the Great Western Railway to Niagara Falls and viewed this wonder of nature as well as the new Suspension Bridge, likewise a wonder to man in those days. Such trips are good for a child. That one is fresh and bright in my mind today.

Another journey stands in my memory; I was ten years old then and it was soon after the war that we went to the Shenandoah Valley. A cousin, Jarvis Jennings of Greens Farms, had bought a large farm there at White Post. On our way down we stopped at Harper's Ferry to view the scene of John Brown's raid, then so fresh in the public mind. At Winchester we saw soldiers in uniform and looking across into the suburbs we saw the cemeteries of the "Blue and the Gray," with the markers. We drove down the pike, fording streams and noting the breastwork on either side of the road at places where the various armies had entrenched. We finally arrived at Cousin Jarvis's farm.

Everywhere, barns, outbuildings, and bridges had been destroyed. The armies had commandeered all

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iron kettles, plows, wagons, and implements. On horseback we visited a number of old plantation settlers; their homes were destitute of carpets, which had been taken for blankets for the soldiers. The flour mills were destroyed and there seemed to be utter desolation. Such was the impression on my young mind.

The Lure of the Seaway That Is Long Island Sound

THE families of both Father and Mother were farmer folks.

My Grandfather Jennings owned the land to the north of "Uncle" Samuel Craft's "Hot Hole" lot and reaching up the western slope and on the top of Clapboard Hill. My father acquired two acres and hired William Hemsen, a local carpenter, to build his house at 12 shillings per day, working from sunup to sundown. Queen Anne was dead and of her successors Greens Farms at this time knew nothing and cared less. The old salt-box type of house was changing to a two-story upright that was built with its gable end to the road. There was a story-and-a-half addition used as a dining-room and a sitting-room, and lean-to for the outer kitchen and woodhouse.

The building of a house in those days was a season's job for the carpenter. The chestnut timber had to be hewed, flooring planed and matched by hand, windows, doors, and house trimmings all to be made by the local carpenter.

With such a background and in such an environment it was only natural that I should have been brought up to be a farmer. One of my first jobs was to go up to the swamp pasture and let down the bars

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for the cows and horse to come to the barn; another job was to turn the grindstone. There is no better exercise to strengthen young backs than turning the grindstone. Then came my row of onions that I had to weed—another form of exercise for young backs. But backaches were forgotten that fall when the onions were shipped to New York in Captain Joe Jennings's market boat and a big new dollar came to me. I was proud of that dollar.

Father always had a love for the salt water and a hankering for sea food. When he went to the shore he took me along. While he was gathering the seaweed on the beach or digging long clams on the flats or wading out waist deep raking out "little necks" (quahogs), or gathering scallops in the eel grass, or tonging for oysters offshore, I was wading barefoot along the edge of the ebbing tide. The joyful sensation to my feet remains to this day. The little wavelets of soft wet sand left by the water were like rubber cushions. I watched each gentle ripple of water as it failed to come up to the mark on the sand. Why did the sea water ebb and flow? The long, long thoughts of childhood—and the questions!

Then I would paddle along the crest of the beach leaving my footprints in the sand, picking up yellow jingle shells, blue and iridescent mussel shells, or, if lucky, the long curved thin razor shells. The round scallop shell with its radiating ribs from the straight



THE WILLIAM J. JENNINGS HOMESTEAD
Purchased by the late Frederick T. Bedford



DANIEL SHERWOOD HOUSE ON SHERWOOD ISLAND
The original settler of Sherwood Island about 1790

The Lure of Long Island Sound

hinge side was much prized by Sister for making pin-cushions. Then there was the curiously twisted periwinkle, the polished clam or oyster shell, star fish, the horsefoot with its dome shell with the eyes on top, feet underside, and a long spike tail used in propelling itself on the sea bottom. There were the black pocket-books and strings of rattlers, both marine growths; the rock weed, a variety of sargasso of the tropic seas, with its puff balls that would pop when pressed; the eel grass; the tall stately sedge plant turning, twisting, and bowing at every motion of the water. All these were of interest—wonders to my budding mind.

In my teens I bought an old skipjack sailboat and learned to sail it on Compo Mill Pond, and, feeling like a Viking of centuries ago, dared the open sea to Cockenoes Island and along the coast.

In these after years I have walked the shoreline from Dennies Point at Sasco Creek to Cedar Point at Compo, fished at the outer rock off Frost Point, and picked up oysters at the outer rock off Sherwood Point at very low tide, and with the horse and wagon have gathered seaweed there, fording the creek at Burial Hill but only at low water. In zero weather I have walked the ice from across the cove or bight to Frost Point.

Within my remembrance the easterly storms have washed the banks along the Indian Field lands many feet inland, and the southwesters have beaten back

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with terrific force into the cove at Bankside, washing away the banks and sending the spray and surf twenty feet up across the highway.

All this shore land was laid down by the great ice cap when it was receding eons ago. I suppose the fishing rocks far out from the points and many other boulders were drifted in by the ice and left in place to hold the bank. This same explanation applies to Seymour Rock in Saugatuck Harbor. Parallel ledges of the eternal rock extend out from the homestead of Frederick T. Bedford into deep water and so prevent the sand from drifting. Some sixty years ago adjoining proprietors along the cove at Bankside began building retaining walls to hold back the surf. Often breaches would be pounded through the wall by the sea. Now many jetties are built out into the Sound and they appear to keep the sand and gravel from washing. Midway out to Frost Point there is a small hook on the home-lot of Frederick T. Bedford. If a curved line were drawn from this point to the creek at Burial Hill, you could visualize the wash during the last century.

In August, 1931, there was a hurricane from the northwest that blew down hundreds of trees along the track of the storm and hit very hard at Bankside. At this time the tides nearly bisected the Stetson bluff; it required thousands of dollars to refill the bank and build concrete retaining walls.

The Lure of Long Island Sound

The Sound has many whims and caprices. It can be smooth and shiny as a plate-glass mirror, blue in color, warm and sensuous for bathing. With "poge" tides one can walk far out from shore. Then again the easterly storms send great mountainous tides up the Sound filling every creek to overflowing, salt meadows awash, and the parkway to Burial Hill a foot under water. Our beach is treacherous on account of the sand-bars. Not so many years ago three Greens Farms women, the Barlow sisters, were drowned together while clamming; the incoming tide confused them and they stepped off the sand-bar into the deep water; although expert swimmers, they were drawn under by the weight of the baskets full of clams, attached to their waists.

From Mr. William H. Davis's front porch on Clapboard Hill there is a wide view of the Sound. Off Stratford is the Middle Ground lighthouse. Off Fairfield are Black Rock and Penfield Reef, and down among the Norwalk Islands is Peck's Ledge. To the southwest, across on the Long Island shore, is the tall white tower of Eaton's Neck Light, and to the east near Port Jefferson the Oldfield Light stands forth. These lighthouses are equipped with fog-horns. From my house years ago I saw the *Great Eastern* with its five funnels and six masts sail through the Sound, and after a storm, great fleets of coasting schooners scudding eastward. Years ago I complimented a man

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whom I knew in New York on being the captain of a Sound night steamer. "It's only a dog's life," he said. "Your orders are to sail and make a safe trip and harbor in the morning, regardless of weather."

One foggy winter night I was ill with the grippe, tired, weary, rolling and tossing in bed worse than the Diamond Shoals Lightship. Through the fog came the almost human tones of the siren blast of a Sound steamer. My nerves relaxed and I gained some sleep.

I have sailed the Hudson River and the Great Lakes, and Puget Sound in my time. I have been through the West Indies and the Panama Canal. But one clear day in early October Mrs. Jennings and myself sailed from New Haven to New York on the day boat. The tang of the sea was in the air. From off Stratford Shoals Lighthouse to Stamford, Clapboard Hill was in full view. It was a trip surpassing any other in my memory. Dear old Long Island Sound—I love thee best of all!



THE MINUTE MAN



THE MACHAMUX MEMORIAL BOULDER

The Minute Man

“**T**HE MINUTE MAN” at the intersection of Compo Road and Hill Point Road was dedicated on June 17, 1910, under the initiative and supervision of The Connecticut Society, Sons of the American Revolution, who desired to mark permanently the spot where the largest number of troops were engaged in any battle in the state during the Revolutionary War. A committee from the society was appointed to gather the facts, solicit the funds, and erect a suitable memorial. The funds were secured from an appropriation by the legislature, from The Connecticut Society, Sons of the American Revolution, and from generous gifts of interested citizens and friends throughout the state.

The statue was executed by the young, patriotic, and gifted H. Daniel Webster, descended from the brilliant man whose name he perpetuated. Mr. Webster had lately moved to Westport from Sioux Falls, S. D., where his immediate ancestors had been pioneers in opening that section of the country. The bronze was cast in the well-known Tiffany Studios. The design received most favorable criticism from the State Board of Architects. The statue is a composite figure of a number of local people descended from colonial patriots.

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A brief history of the engagement that this statue commemorates might be in order. In the spring of 1777, 2,500 of the flower of the British infantry and cavalry commanded by the most brilliant leaders of the Crown were landed, with their field guns, from a large fleet which had left New York the day before, and had anchored off Compo Point (then called Cedar Point). The invaders proceeded up Compo Road and thence to Redding and Danbury, where they hoped to remain. However, because of reports that the colonists were gathering between Danbury and the shore, the British were compelled to burn the vast war supplies that Connecticut had gathered for General Washington's use, and then started to retreat by way of Ridgefield. It was at that town that they met with their first real resistance, and General Wooster and Colonel Gould of the patriots fell mortally wounded. Thence the retreat of the British became a rout, and at Compo Hill there was a sharp engagement between the aroused colonists who, by this time, had gathered from all sections of Connecticut, and the troops that had been landed to cover the retreat of the expeditionary force.

As a parting send-off, when the British sailed away from Compo Beach, it is related to me by Captain Charles Thorpe Allen, the Minute Men had planned to burn tar barrels on Compo Hill, but for some unknown reason the Minute Men gathered on a high

The Minute Man

flat-top rock near the intersection of Compo Road and Narrow Rocks Road, and here burned their barrels. This new beacon light confused the admiral as to direction, and his vessel went on the rocks, since known as Tory Reef, to the east of Cockenoes Island. The rock where the signal was placed is known to this day as "Tar Rock."

For a more complete description of this unsuccessful expedition, the reader is referred to "The Minute Man," compiled and published by The Connecticut Society, Sons of the American Revolution, and on file in the Westport Library.

To Honorable William H. Burr, patriot and "Long Lots" farmer, and a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, is due the credit for securing the appropriation from the state legislature, and additional gifts for the erection of this Minute Man monument.

The Four Meeting-Houses

“**A**T a meeting warned and accordingly held on June the 12-1711 at maximus Johnan drews then being Chosen recorder for the meeting. there was then a cleere vote passed that thare should be seventy pound gifen to mus dannil Chapman for a years salary for preching. further it was voted that Simon Couch, John Cabel and John andrews should be selectmen for this present yere. furdere it was voted that these men should set up notification of meetings in ritting one at or neere the meting house in maximus and another at Compo sine post at lest three dayes before the meeting and that to be sofisunt warning.”

Thus was organized the West Parish of Fairfield, now known as the Congregational Society of Greens Farms. This transcript is taken from the original record book in possession of the society.

From scraps of information and imagination it appears that the Western Farmers of Fairfield adopted the style of the first meeting-house from the mother church. It was about 36 feet square with 16-foot posts with 4 roofs rising to a point in the centre, with the front door facing east. There was neither chimney nor fireplace. The frame was of hewed oak, the underpinning was of stone, and there were small windows



Kerr Eby

THE GREENS FARMS CHURCH

*From an original etching entitled "Turkey Hill" by Kerr Eby
Reproduced by the courtesy of Mr. Eby*

The Four Meeting-Houses

with small panes; sides and roof were covered with four and one-half foot clapboard, rived out of trees growing on Clapboard Hill.

The building was ready for service in 1711, but was not completed for some ten years thereafter. It was located at Machamux on the large open common, green, or military parade ground, very near the Machamux boulder. This meeting-house was built by yearly tax rates, raised to carry on and complete the work, and the society voted to have a lock on the door. The interior was doubtlessly roughly furnished, and without plaster or paint. At first it was furnished with rough seats, but later on pews were added.

In 1736 there was a movement for the building of the second meeting-house, as the parish had increased rapidly in population and wealth. "It was put to vote whether or no the Parish would build a meeting house for the worship of God and more than two-thirds of s'd Parish then present at the meeting voted in ye affermitive."

In the following year the parish voted to send an agent to the General Assembly to request a committee to stake a place for a meeting-house; a committee was appointed to go and view Greenfield and Stratfield meeting-houses. In December of that year it was further voted that they "would build a meeting house 52 feet in length and 40 feet wide and 26 foot posts." The committee set the stake for this, the second or

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Colonial meeting-house, west of Muddy Brook on the north side of the Country Road. The site is nearly opposite the gateway of the Colonial Burying Ground. It is quite possible that this Colonial meeting-house and cemetery were located on common lands as I have been unable to find any record of previous ownership.

In 1738 "ye parish voted would raise the meeting house by way of gifts. The Rev. Daniel Chapman of his own free will gives ten pounds and the same amount in 1740." Voted: "Capt. Thomas Nash, Capt. Simon Couch and Samuel Sherwood shall be a committee to hire men to raise and build the meeting house. John Andrews being clerk for that year." They further voted to "raise a rate at eight pence per pound to start the work." The tax collector was to have "two pounds and five shillings to collect and make good to the parish for his reward."

The parish appeared ungrateful to its first minister, for when it was put to a vote to give the old meeting-house to Reverend Mr. Chapman, it voted in the negative and decided to sell it at "public vendue and apply the proceeds towards the new meeting house."

At about this time the old square colonial type of meeting-house in New England was changing to a rectangular building, with belfry and spire. In the early settlements in New England, these old square meeting-houses were used for the worship of God and for all public meetings, as well as for places of defense

The Four Meeting-Houses

from the Indians. The people of Machamux lived peaceably with the Indians. The second meeting-house had a belfry and a short spire. A bell was bought and hung in 1755. There were two rows of windows, and the building was probably covered with clapboards three and a half feet long; it, too, had no chimney. The interior was plastered and plainly furnished.

There is no mention of a "sabba day house" which was an adjunct to many New England meeting-houses. Probably those coming from a distance stopped at a friend's home or hired a room in a neighboring house for warming up their cold lunches and eating them during intermission. The horse shed was ever a place of rendezvous for the men of the parish before and after service; crops and politics as well as the sermon were discussed.

It was voted that particular persons should have the liberty to build their own pews. Andrew Burr and Thad. Burr formed the committee to appoint each man's new place. Their first allotment in 1741 caused disorder and a new one was made by the committee. The photograph opposite is an extra reproduction from the original drawing in the clerk's record book. It should be noted that this list of pewholders seems to signify the following grounds of advancement, namely: age, dignity of descent, place of public trust, pious disposition, and estate.

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Many of the deacons took short naps during the long prayers by the saintly ministers who served in this church, while the young men and maidens looked over the high backs of the old square pews and cast those significant glances that resulted in future mutual happiness.

The centre of the church had long seats or "slips" as they were familiarly called; the galleries were also similarly arranged. The tything man had his seat in the front gallery, while the negro slaves occupied a portion in the rear. This entry of 1776 is of interest: "Paid to Cæsar (negro) for ringing ye bell £2 10s."

In 1781 action was taken toward the location of the third meeting-house. The committee of the General Court on location caused the parish to be measured diagonally; the intersecting point was on a clump of rocks a short distance south of the present site on the east side of West Parish Road. There arose dissatisfaction over this site. Then Thomas Nash gave to the parish the present site known as "meeting-house green" extending easterly to the church burying ground, also the land for a highway leading up from the west side. Moses Sherwood the same day gave the land for a highway leading up from the southeast. These highways were to be four rods wide their entire length. This Thomas Nash was a direct descendant of Thomas Nash, the first blacksmith.

In 1850 action was taken relating to the building of

The Four Meeting-Houses

this fourth meeting-house and a committee was appointed to circulate a paper to be binding when \$4000 was subscribed. Early in the morning of April 21, 1852, the old third meeting-house was burned to the ground. Plans having been procured, the society on June 22, 1852, voted John Goodsell, Talcott B. Wakeman, John S. Hyde, William J. Jennings, Henry B. Wakeman, and Hezekiah Lockwood as the building committee. Additional lands were bought in the rear from Daniel Burr for the purpose of setting the meeting-house back. The dedication of this new meeting-house (the present one) occurred on the 8th day of February, 1853.

The Sherwoods of Sherwood Island

THE name of Sherwood can be traced to the great Sherwood Forest in England; in 1643 Thomas Sherwood sailed with his family from Ipswich on the good ship *Frances* and eventually settled in Fairfield.

Daniel, of the fifth generation, a soldier in the Revolution, lived in Greenfield Hill; his son Daniel married Catherine Burr of Fairfield. They built the first house on Sherwood Island on two acres of land, said to be a wedding present to the bride. This was the start of the Sherwood dynasty, and in a little time the whole island was taken over by them, in name as well as possession. We have already learned that it was first called "Fox Island," "Big Island," and "Farmers' Island." By its present designation it will probably be known to posterity.

The Sherwoods were a prolific race; of the ten children born to Catherine Burr and Daniel Sherwood, seven were sons. Ebenezer and Daniel built and operated the mill at Compo; Abram was captain of the market boats plying between Westport and New York; the son of Silas became the noted Judge Silas Burr Sherwood of Westport. The three youngest sons were triplets—Francis, Franklin, Frederick. They were born in 1810 and when sixteen years old, all three



FIREPLACE IN THE HOUSE OF DAN' L SHERWOOD

Built about 1816 on Hills Point Road

By the courtesy of Edith Very Sherwood

The Sherwoods of Sherwood Island

shipped to sea. Those were the days of the clipper ships, schooners, and brigs—days of adventure on uncharted seas to ports where a ship from the United States was a rare sight. After successful years of adventure these three sons rose to the position of captain and became owners of their own vessels. They were engaged largely in coast trade, carrying both passengers and freight between New York and southern ports. In 1842 Captain Francis was shipwrecked on the brig *Ashley*; in 1847 he bore General Scott's dispatches to New Orleans on the ship *Carolina*, announcing the capitulation of the City of Mexico and the surrender of the Mexican forces under Santa Anna.

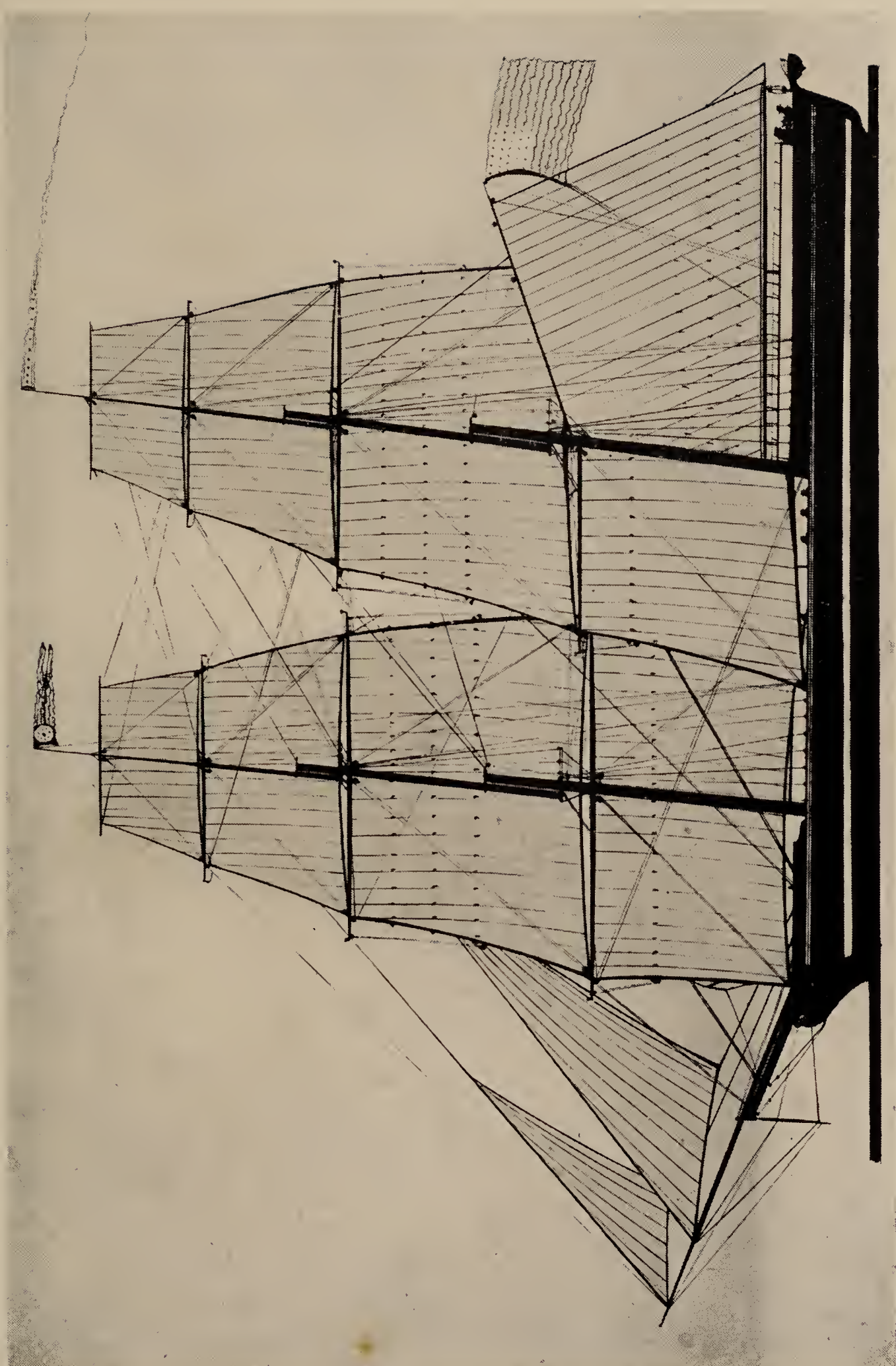
Captain Franklin from 1835-1838 was engaged in plying between New York, Havana, New Orleans, and Texas ports. There is a record of eighty-six voyages. Later he sailed to China and other eastern lands, then to Havre, Liverpool, and European ports. Captain Frederick was also engaged in coast trading in the South. He commanded the ship *Skylight* which made six notable voyages to California by way of Cape Horn.

These three captains lived to celebrate their seventieth birthday; always hale and hearty, they enjoyed meeting in the same port, as frequently happened. They looked so much alike when young that it was their pleasure to play many a joke. All three in succession often went to the same barber, ordered one dinner after another, or sat in succession for their por-

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traits to the astonishment of all those who served them. They were men of sterling character, modest and unassuming. They followed the sea respectively thirty-five, thirty-three, and thirty years, and it is to be regretted that they left no records of their travels.

Just west of Sherwood Island is "Little Island," famous as a rendezvous of that pirate of all pirates, Captain Kidd. For many years tradition had it that much of his gold was buried there. Captain Kidd was executed in England in 1701, a full century before the advent of the first Sherwood to the island, but any gold he might have left there is of little worth compared to the lives and accomplishments of those other captains of Bankside—the Sherwoods.



THE BARQUE CAROLINA

Owned and commanded by Captain Franklin Sherwood, about 1840

From a pen drawing in a ship's account book now in the possession of his daughter, Fanny Sherwood Elwood

Schools

AFTER 1660 the General Court of Connecticut authorized the extension of public schools. Any town of 50 families had to provide such a school. In 1703 old records mention a vote allowing a schoolhouse to be built on the common; this school stood beside the meeting-house. After this date John Andrews in his record of the West Parish of Fairfield mentions schools kept here and later at Compo and then at Long Lots, and also in private homes in the remote districts. A teacher went from school to school and taught several months at each. A night school is mentioned here as early as 1715.

Following is a copy of the original vote in the parish records which shows that even in 1717 the people were making provision for the education of the children:

“October the 23d 1717

“a parrish meetting in the west parrish in fairfield first voat that the remainder of the charg that shall arise upon the skol that the cuntry mony gifen for that youse Doth no Defraye shall be paid by parerents and Masters of Such Children to go to Chool for the Year insuing

“2—voat Cap. Samuel Couch Ens. Benjamin Rumsey and Ens. John Andrews Chosen Committey for the School for the Year Ensuing

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“3—voat that this meating should be Adjourned untill the 31 of instant October Sun one hour high at night”

So apparently the parents or guardians of the children had to pay what the county money did not supply. This plan seemed to have been continued down to my boyhood days, when I remember coming home from school with a little bill for so many days' schooling at two cents a day.

In a deed executed the 28th day of October, 1837, Thomas F. Davies, Daniel Burr, and David Coley quit-claimed to Ebenezer B. Adams “a certain piece or tract of Land situated in the Parish of Greens farms in said Fairfield; Bounded as follows: South on Land of Chas. Fairfield and all other sides on Highway in quantity one Acre and Twenty two Rods the same be more or less—together with the Academy thereon standing.” This building was erected several years before and Reverend Mr. Davies had been the principal.

Mr. Ebenezer B. Adams, A.M., was born on December 3, 1810, in Greens Farms, the son of Captain and Mrs. Joseph Adams. His father was interested in education and early resolved to give his only son the best educational advantages the state afforded. He was prepared for college by Doctor Hawley Olmstead at the Wilton Academy, and received his degree from Yale in 1831. Soon after his graduation he became a

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teacher in the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in Hartford, Conn., where he remained nearly three years; he finally was compelled to resign because of ill health. After resting for a time, he entered upon his life work as principal of Maple Grove Academy, more familiarly known as the Adams Academy, and here for thirty years, sixty consecutive terms of twenty-two weeks each, he toiled for the interest and welfare of the young. His roster of pupils enumerates 653; students came from nearly every state in the Union, and several foreign countries. This community was very fortunate in this school, for Mr. Adams prepared our fathers and mothers with an education second to none, and of those who were prepared for college, all entered without condition, and no one was ever rejected. As a teacher he had few superiors; yet he was modest and unassuming, commanding the respect and regard of all his pupils.

I am informed that the original seating arrangement in the old Adams Academy was as follows: on two sides and at one end the seats faced the wall; then the next row of seats faced the centre of the room, thus bringing the two rows back to back. The students paid their own tuition. The building was used for religious evening services during the fifties of the last century, for there is an entry in the account book of the society for candles to light the schoolroom.

After Mr. Adams's time, the people of Greens Farms

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formed an association and conducted The Greens Farms Academy for a dozen years or so. Robert Forsyth, A.M., succeeded Mr. Adams for about eight years; then for a few years students from Yale College conducted the academy until it was discontinued, the building finally becoming the West Long Lots School House. Horace Staples of Westport, who had received his education at the Staples Free Academy in Easton, was in close sympathy with Greens Farms, and conceived the plan of building and endowing the Staples High School in Westport.

The singing school brought together the young people for mutual improvement in singing. These schools were presided over by some capable instructor, as Doctor M. V. B. Dunham, of Greenfield Hill; and it is known that many romances were commenced and consummated during the hours of these singing-schools.

The district schools were generally kept in two terms—the winter and the summer term. The former term was generally presided over by a man teacher, while the latter term was delegated to a woman. Among the teachers who grew up in the West Parish whom I remember was Thomas D. Elwood, a lay reader in the Methodist Church and sometimes a preacher. He was a cripple but he would walk to and from Westport every day, teaching the school which was held in the schoolhouse back of the Saugatuck Congrega-

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tional Church on the Post Road. Ebenezer Beers and Maurice B. Wakeman taught in the old Greens Farms School; Daniel Burr Bradley and Edward C. Birge taught in the East Long Lots School; while Lewis P. Wakeman and James Sherwood had charge of the Compo School. Among the lady teachers who were prominent were M. Cornelia Elwood, Bessie R. Taylor, Della Bradley, Grace H. Relyea, and Lucy Elwood. All of these teachers gave a good account of themselves.

The West Long Lots School was a small affair and was long known as the "hut," and was situated at the intersection of Church Street and Morningside Drive, now the home site of Horatio P. Mills. After the closing of the Greens Farms Academy and the merging of the East and West Long Lots Schools the combined school was held in the academy building. This was made possible by Robert Martin who bought and donated the property to the district.

Men of Distinction

THE following is a quotation from the Historical Discourse delivered at the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the formation of the Church in Greens Farms, Conn., held October 26, 1865, by Reverend B. J. Relyea, pastor of the church:

“... Her (Greens Farms) children, bearing with them the results of pious training here, have nobly done their part in moulding society, and shaping its institutions in almost every State of the Union, even on the far-off shores of the Pacific.

“Thirty-four of her sons have been graduates of colleges, most of them at Yale. Twelve have gone forth from these homes to preach the Gospel, while, of those who derived their maternal ancestry here, one was the celebrated Moses Stuart, professor of Biblical Theology at Andover, Mass., whose learning and scholarship have given him a name which shall not die, and whose influence has continued to be a blessing to the churches of our land. One, distinguished for his learning, adorns a professor's chair in Yale College, and another occupies one of the most important pulpits of the State of New York.

“Of those whose childhood home was among these hills and by these firesides, and who received here the rudiments of future greatness, eight have entered upon

Men of Distinction

the profession of law; one of them was James Kent, the celebrated Chancellor of the State of New York, whose opinions are still received with deference at the American Bar, and whose writings will go down as a rich legacy to the legal profession in future generations; two have been members of Congress; one represents the government of the United States at the court of Denmark; two have been judges in the State of Ohio, one occupying a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court in that State. The rising State of Minnesota received as her first judge a native of this parish, Judge Meeker, one distinguished in his profession, and whose maternal relation to Greens Farms gives him a place among her descendants. (His final resting place is in the Greens Farms Cemetery.) Eight have been, or are, eminent in the medical profession. Several are among the most enterprising merchants of New York. Fifteen have been navigators in distant seas. The first American merchant vessel that ever entered the ports of Japan was commanded by a native of Greens Farms (Captain Henry Pierson Burr). Several, occupying important military positions, distinguished themselves for bravery in the Revolutionary War. One acquired a world-wide fame in the War of 1812, as well as the Civil War."

In Retrospect

THE community and the Church of Christ at Greens Farms, true to its long history of Puritan patriotism, united on April 17, 1932, in celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of George Washington's birth. On the old common, a maple tree was planted and dedicated as the Washington-Ripley tree, and on the triangle of the common, the Machamux boulder was dedicated in memory of the friendly relations between the Indians and the early settlers.

The Compo Hill Chapter of the D. A. R. of Westport placed a tablet on this boulder on October 16, 1932. Following is the inscription:

Ye Indian name—Machamux	
Ye Bankside Farmers	1648
Ye First School House	1703
Ye First Meeting House	1711
Ye Name Greens Farms	1732
Rev. Hezekiah Ripley, D.D., Chaplain in the Continental Army, escorted General George Washington along the highway	1775
Ye Burning by the British	1779

Erected by the Compo Hill Chapter
D. A. R. and Friends

1932

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In Retrospect

History relates that Doctor Hezekiah Ripley met General Washington at the Norwalk line and escorted him through Greens Farms following "the country road" through to the Stratford ferry at the Housatonic. As they came to the colonial meeting-house, which then stood opposite the Colonial Burying Ground, they stopped. It is reported to me that some one in the cavalcade wrote the following to a friend: "Our beloved commander stood on the step of our little meeting house and remarked, 'This is a comely little church.' " Unfortunately this letter only recently was lost.

The party stopped at Bulkley's Inn, in Fairfield, and probably dined there. After passing from the house, and while standing in front of it waiting for horses, Washington continued his conversation on public affairs; he passed his finger through the button-hole of the doctor's coat, and said that if the Americans could prolong the contest for one year they would ultimately succeed, because by that time arms and ammunition could be obtained, and they would be invincible.

The Minute Men were the home guard during the Revolutionary War, and were recruited from the plow-man, bay-man, doctors, schoolmasters, preachers, and scholars. They thought quickly, shot straight, their muscles tense and sleeves rolled up ready for action when and where duty called. The homes and

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firesides of West Parish of Fairfield, Greens Farms, were protected by these patriotic men. They gave a good account of themselves in the battle of Compo Hill, and the monument at the intersection of Compo Road and Hill's Point Road was placed there in their honor.

The Civil War tried men's souls. Many young men volunteered; others were drafted. The North and the South both had sincere friends in the parish. Reverend B. J. Relyea, pastor at that time, led the people of this church and community through these trying times without serious family frictions, and it is to the honor of the church that some of the endowment funds were loaned to our Federal Government during those stressful years, when the union of the states was being fought for, and the maintenance of one central government.

Public worship has been maintained all down through these years without a break in the Church of Christ in the old West Parish by capable and educated ministers. Plain farmer folk continued to administer the invested funds of the Church Society, and the records show that not one penny has ever been appropriated for personal use.

Centennial Year, 1876, two hundred and twenty-eight years from the first settlement at Bankside, seems to mark the beginning of the close of the Puritan independency of the old West Parish of Fairfield. Onion

In Retrospect

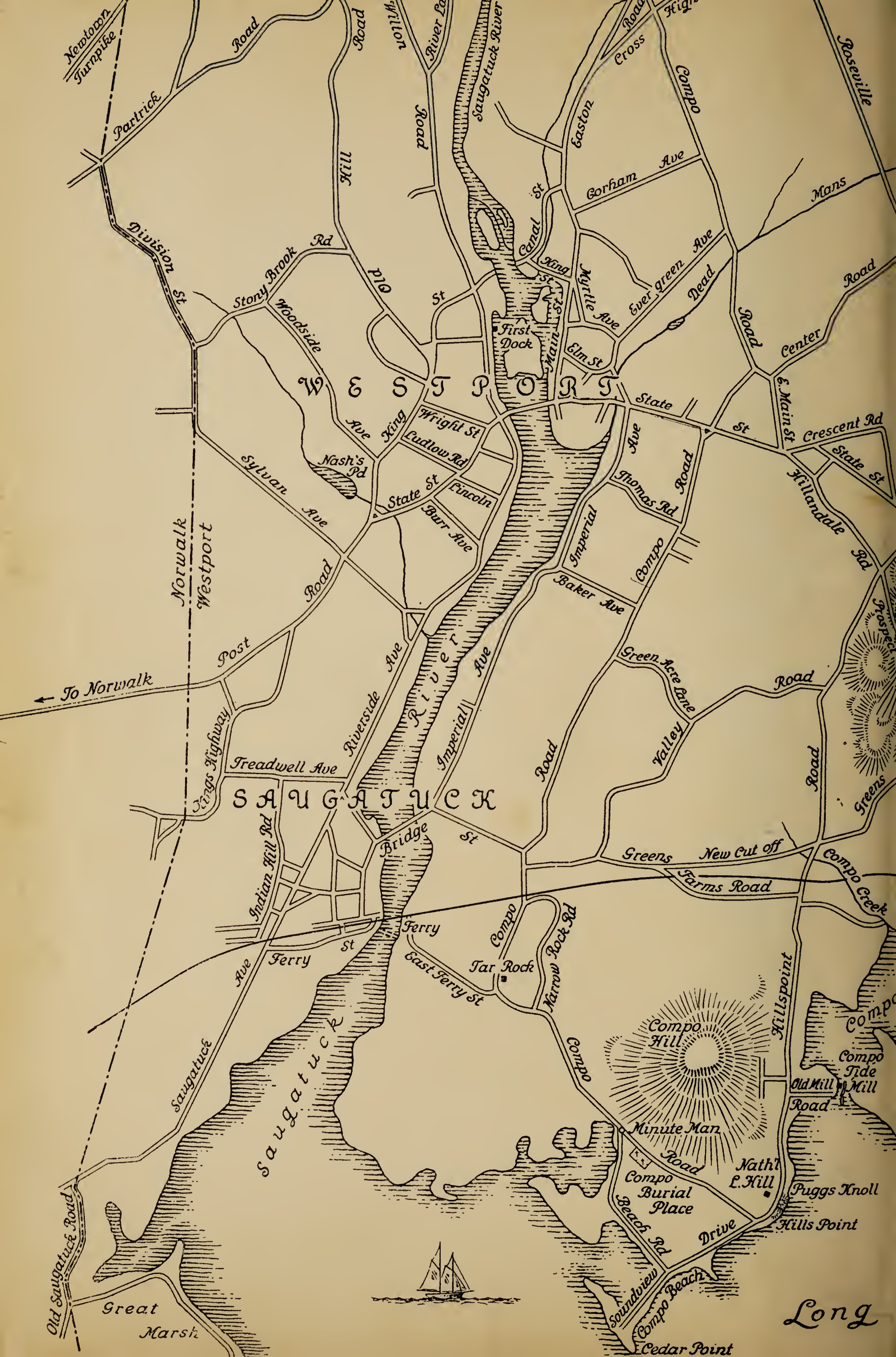
growing, which up to this time had been increasing, began to decline, and by the close of the century had disappeared. It is to the credit of this community that each farmer's onions sold on its own merit in the New York market. Co-operative marketing did not prevail. The period of onion growing brought to Greens Farms the greatest financial prosperity and development of lands and improvement in homes. During these years many sons and daughters went away into commercial and professional life to other cities, yet many of these families had a freehold in the lands hereabouts, notably William C. and James Stewart as well as Arthur Curtis James of New York City, who came into possession of land around the old green through their forebears connected with the Couch family. Many members of the Andrews family, scattered far and wide, are brought back for final resting place in the Colonial Cemetery.

Many changes have taken place among the people of Greens Farms since my boyhood. Then and for years afterwards I knew every person, visited in every home, and many were kindred. They were farmers, independent citizens, and members of the Parish Church. Some were Democrats, others were Republicans, but all good neighbors. Greens Farms has been my home all these years, except some dozen years in Wisconsin. My farming days are past, Old Jerry, the farm horse, is no more, no pig in the pen, and the

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family cow and chickens are cared for on shares by a neighbor. The farm wagons, surrey, the phaeton, and the model "T" Ford are quietly resting in the barn.

"... And where can America look with higher hope for a continuance of cherished American ideals than in the parish of Greens Farms with its long centuries of American history behind it? . . ."





Island

Sound

* The Eleven O'clock Roads
Ø Also known as Sherwood Pond and the Mill Pond.

